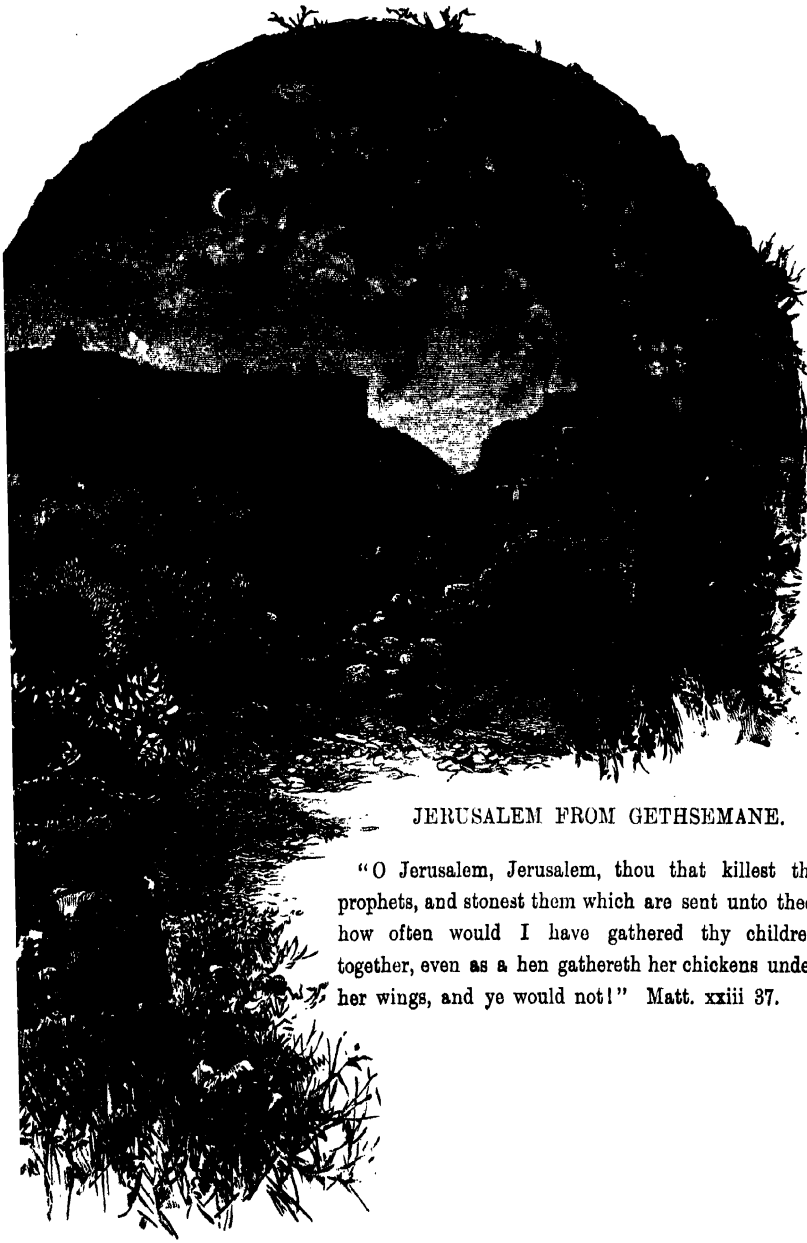

JERUSALEM FROM GETHSEMANE.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Matt. xxiii 37.

PROPHETIC LIGHTS:

Some of the Prominent Prophecies

OF THE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS,

INTERPRETED BY THE

BIBLE AND HISTORY.

BY

E. J. WAGGONER.

'We have also a more sure Word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." 2 Peter i. 19

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PREFACE.

To many people the word "prophecy" conveys the idea of something obscure and incomprehensible. They take but little pleasure in reading the prophetic portions of the Bible. Very often they think that one who undertakes to explain the prophecies is presumptuously meddling with things that belong only to God. The prophecies, they say, may be understood when they are fulfilled and not before.

This is not as it should be; and it would not be so if in time past man had not dealt presumptuously with the prophecies, giving mere human speculation for exposition, when God has said that "no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation," and so have put darkness for light. For the prophecy, instead of being something obscure, is a light. Prophecy is something foretold; it is history in advance. God, who sees the end from the beginning, and who "calleth those things that be not as though they were," is able to write the history of an event before it occurs far more exactly than any human pen can write it afterward. Now if we can understand history when written by men, why should it be thought a thing impossible that we should understand the history when written in advance by the Spirit of God?

The answer will doubtless be that there are so many symbols used, so many things that cannot be understood literally, that one can never be sure that he has the correct interpretation. But this again is a mistake. There are symbols, it is true. But the Bible itself furnishes an explanation of all these symbols, and by placing these explanations and symbols together the prophecy may be read literally. Symbols are used in our common conversation, yet we have no difficulty in understanding one another, because we understand what these figures of speech mean. In like manner, when we accept the Bible explanation of prophetic symbols, we need have no difficulty in understanding the prophecies. By applying these explanations to the symbols in the prophecies already fulfilled, we prove their correctness; and by studying the prophecies that are already fulfilled, we are assured that those that still remain will be as exactly fulfilled. Thus the prophecy becomes the grand proof of the inspiration of the Bible. If we throw aside the prophecy, we cannot demonstrate that the Bible is the inspired word of God.

The design of this book is to remove some of the covering that has been thrown over prophecy by tradition and human speculation, so that its clear light may shine out. This has been done by letting the Bible tell its own story in its own language. No theories are advanced, but the plain predictions are laid side by side with the well-attested historical facts which show their exact fulfillment. Although each chapter of the book is complete in itself, it will be seen that they all point to the one object of the prophecies of the Bible, namely, the consummation of the Christian's hope. It is hoped that the perusal of this book may strengthen the faith of those who have this hope, and may lead others to love the coming of our Lord.

E. J. W.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE MESSIAH. - - - - - 9-22

CHAPTER II.

THE TRANSFIGURATION. - - - - - - - - - - 23-30

CHAPTER III.

THE SURE WORD. - - - - - - - - - - - - 31-44

CHAPTER IV.

TESTIMONY OF THE CENTURIES. - - - - - - - - 45-58

CHAPTER V.

THE KINGDOM OF BABYLON. - - - - - - - - - 59-66

CHAPTER VI.

THE FALL OF BABYLON. - - - - - - - - - - 67-74

CHAPTER VII.

MEDO-PERSIA AND GREECE. - - - - - - - - - - 75-78

CHAPTER VIII.

ROME. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 79-84

CHAPTER IX.

THE PAPACY. - - - - - - - - - - - - - 85-104

CHAPTER X.

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING.—*The Time of the End—Signs in the Heavens—Perilous Times.* - - - - - - - - - - - 105-134

CHAPTER XI.

THE PROMISES TO ISRAEL.—*The First Dominion—The Call of Abraham—The Hope of the Promise—The Rest that Remains—The Throne of David—The True Israel—The Gathering of Israel—The Dominion Restored.* - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 135-180

"His place of birth a solemn angel tells
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;
They gladly thither haste, and, by a choir
Of squadron'd angels, hear his carol sung;
A virgin is his mother, but his sire
The Power of the Most High."—*Milton.*

FAIR indeed was the estate granted to our first parents. Six days had the great Creator employed in fitting it up for them, each day's work, as it was completed, being pronounced good. As the crowning act, when everything had been prepared for his reception, God made man in his own image, and gave him dominion over the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, the fish of the sea, and, in short, over the whole earth and everything that it contained. The earth was fruitful, and was unincumbered with thorns and thistles. Slight toil, and that unaccompanied by fatigue, would suffice to cause it to yield to him its abundant increase. Moreover, "the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." Gen. 2:8, 9, 15.

While man himself had to subdue, to plant and cultivate, the remainder of the earth, God himself planted the garden of Eden, and

man had only the delightful task of directing the luxurious growth, and of feasting his eyes and his palate upon the fruit which grew spontaneously. Here was provision for perfect happiness: everything was provided without stint, and of the most exquisite quality, and man had the most refined, delicate taste with which to enjoy it to the full, while his perfectly balanced nature prevented him from marring the pleasure by any excess. With a companion perfectly adapted to him, his counterpart, nothing was lacking that could contribute to his enjoyment of life.

But into this Eden the tempter came. Having been cast as profane out of the mount of God, because of the rebellion to which his pride had urged him on, his sole satisfaction was found in trying to thwart the purposes of God, and in causing others to share his own unhappy lot. Knowing that obedience is life, he planned the death of the human race, by causing our first parents to sin. Where was happiness, he sowed the seeds of discontent; where was meekness, and willing subjection to God's just and mild requirements, he planted pride and unholy ambition; where was the utmost liberty, because man was walking in the law of God, the adversary of souls brought hard and cruel bondage, and the lonely prison house. By insinuating into their minds the idea that God was a harsh task-master, and that by his gentle rules he was seeking to elevate himself at their expense, he caused them to seek for "larger liberty" in their own way; and thus they found that, although a man's own way may seem right in his own eyes, "the end thereof are the ways of death." "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

But the loving Father did not leave his children entirely in the hands of their merciless adversary. Immediately after our first parents had committed the sin which "brought death into the world, and all our woe, with loss of Eden," God spoke the words which saved the guilty ones from utter despair, saying to the one who had caused their fall, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Gen. 3:15. These words are universally understood as containing the promise of the Messiah, who should destroy Satan and his works, and set at liberty those whom he had bound; and in the succeeding ages, until the day that they were fulfilled, the highest hope of every woman who believed God's word, was that she might be the mother of the great Deliverer.

Immediately we find evidence of faith in the coming Redeemer. Abel brought to the Lord an offering "of the firstlings of his flock

and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering." Says the apostle: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh." Heb. 11:4. This offering showed Abel's faith in the Lamb of God, who, by his death, should take away sin. Because of his faith he was counted righteous. This exceedingly brief account is complete evidence to us that the plan of salvation was known in all its fullness to the first inhabitants of earth. By this sacrifice Abel showed that he knew how and why the Messiah was to be "bruised."

The promised Messiah, who was foreshadowed by all the Jewish sacrifices, was the hope of that nation in all its history. So closely is the Messiah connected with the Jewish nation, that we cannot think of one without thinking of the other. Moses prophesied of Christ, when he said to the Jews: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." Deut. 18:15. And so generally was this prophecy understood as referring to the Messiah, that when the Jews wanted to know if John the Baptist was the promised One, they simply asked, "Art thou that prophet?" John 1:21.

The Old Testament is dotted with prophecies concerning the first advent of Christ. To them Jesus appealed to prove his divine mission, and by them the apostles convinced the people that Jesus is the Christ. After Philip had obeyed the Master's call, "Follow me," he found Nathanael, and said unto him, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph." John 1:45. Jesus himself said to the unbelieving Jews: "For if ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me." John 5:46. Paul said to Agrippa: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer," etc. Acts 26:22, 23. And Peter said of Christ: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43.

Since, on the authority of the Scriptures, there was so general an expectation of the Messiah, why was it that when Christ came "he came unto his own, and his own received him not"? John 1:11. The only answer that can be given is that they did not really believe their own Scriptures; for all the prophecies concerning the Messiah were fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, and could not apply to any other person. It is true that we would not recognize many of these Old

Testament prophecies as referring to Christ, if the application were not made by the inspired writers of the New Testament. But the Jews had inspired prophets to enlighten them, so that they were without excuse for their unbelief. The application of many of the prophecies, however, is very evident, and we can readily trace their fulfillment as we read the New Testament narrative. From the multitude of these prophecies, we shall note the fulfillment of a few of the most prominent, as an aid to our faith in the statement that "the Scripture cannot be broken."

When the wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" the chief priests and scribes of the people, to whom Herod applied to know where Christ should be born, replied promptly, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet." And then they quoted the words which the prophet Micah had spoken more than seven hundred years before: "And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Micah 5 : 2; Matt. 2 : 1–6.

The careful reader of the Scriptures knows that Joseph and Mary were residents of Nazareth, yet when the proper time came, a heathen emperor did his part toward the fulfillment of prophecy, by sending forth a decree that brought them to Bethlehem.

Of the life of Jesus before his baptism, the Scriptures say very little; but the date of his baptism was specified in prophecy nearly six hundred years before it took place. This prophecy is one of the most interesting and important in the Bible, and is well worth study. It was written by the prophet Daniel, to whom it was revealed by the angel Gabriel in the first year of Darius, B. C. 538. Some time before, Daniel had had a vision which he did not fully understand (Dan. 8 : 27), and in answer to his earnest prayer for light, the angel came to give him skill and understanding. The part of his revelation which pertains to this subject, is found in the following verses:—

"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three-score and two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after three-score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week

he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." Dan. 9:25–27.

The going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, was in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, or 457 B. C. See the seventh chapter of Ezra. There had been decrees concerning Jerusalem (see Ezra 1:1–4; 5:1–15), but this is the only one that contemplated the complete restoration of Jerusalem to its former power and glory, and consequently it is the one that must be referred to in the prophecy of Daniel.

From the date of this decree, until the Messiah, was to be seven weeks and three-score and two weeks, that is sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three days. Of course this did not mean that the Messiah should come in a little over a year from that time; but the prophecy concerning the days is one in which nations are represented by symbols (see Dan. 8:1–14), and the days must therefore be symbolic. In a prophecy recorded in Eze. 4:6, we learn that a prophetic day is a literal year. Therefore Dan. 9:25 is equivalent to the statement that four hundred and eighty-three years from the decree of Artaxerxes (B. C. 457), Messiah the Prince should come.

"But," says one, "four hundred and eighty-three years from 457 B. C. would end several years this side of Christ." That is true, but it is contemplated in the prophecy. The meaning of Messiah is the Anointed. See margin of John 1:41. By comparing a few scriptures we shall find that his anointing took place at his baptism.

In Acts 10:37, 38 Peter says of the word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ:—

"That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil."

Thus we learn that Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost, immediately after which he began his ministry. Now turn to the record in Matt. 3:16, 17, and we find that as Jesus came up out of the water where he had been baptized, the Spirit of God descended like a dove upon him, and the voice of God was heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." So Jesus was formally set apart, before the multitude, for his divine mission, and very soon afterward we find him in the synagogue, saying: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18.

Jesus, therefore, although the divinely appointed Messiah from the foundation of the world, did not take this title, meaning the Anointed One, until his baptism. And we shall find that this was just four hundred and eighty-three years after the decree of Artaxerxes to restore Jerusalem.

The baptism of Jesus occurred when he "began to be about thirty years of age." Luke 3:23. But it was not in the year 30 A. D., because the Christian era dates from about four years after the birth of Christ. From Luke 1:13, 36, we learn that Jesus was just six months younger than John the Baptist. Now since thirty years was the age when those who were appointed to the service of the sanctuary could enter upon their work (Num. 4:30), and since Jesus followed this rule, and was baptized at the age of thirty, we must conclude that John the Baptist began his work as the forerunner of Christ at the same age, or about six months before Jesus was baptized. So if we can find the date of the beginning of John's work, we shall know the date of the baptism of Jesus. The following scripture gives most explicitly the time when John began his ministry:—

"Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philp tetrarch of Ituræa and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Luke 3:1–3.

Tiberius Cæsar began to reign conjointly with his father in A. D. 12, and his fifteenth year would therefore be A. D. 27. John began his work, therefore, and Jesus was baptized, in the year A. D. 27. Now let us see if this agrees with what the angel said. Four hundred and eighty-three years from B. C. 457 would reach to the close of A. D. 26, provided we begin to reckon from the first day of B. C. 457. But the decree went forth some time in the year 457 B. C., and not on its first day, and consequently there were only four hundred and fifty-six and a fraction, of the four hundred and eighty-three years, before the Christian era. Four hundred and eighty-three, less four hundred and fifty-six and a fraction, leaves twenty-six and a fraction. That is, something over twenty-six of the four hundred and eighty-three years remained after the beginning of the Christian era. But this would bring us into the year 27 A. D., and that is when, as we have seen, the baptism of Jesus did actually occur. At that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "*The time is fulfilled*, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel." Mark 1:15.

If the Jews, therefore, had been attentive to the prophecies that were in their hands, and had heartily believed them, they would have acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah as soon as they saw the Holy Spirit descend upon him at his baptism.

But the angel told Daniel still more concerning Christ. From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, seventy prophetic weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, were allotted to the Jewish people. So when Jesus was baptized, one week of years still remained. This week of years, beginning in A. D. 27, is the week referred to in Dan. 9:27: "And he [the Messiah] shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." All the Jewish sacrifices and oblations typified the real sacrifice of Christ, and when he was "cut off, but not for himself" (Dan. 9:26), they were made to cease.

Jesus was crucified at the time of the Passover. (See Matt. 26:2.) From John 2:13; 5:1; 6:4; 12:1, we find that the Passover at which he was crucified was the fourth one that he attended after his baptism. Then his earthly ministry lasted three full years and a half, and the Scripture was fulfilled, which said that in the midst of the week (the last week of years allotted to the Jewish nation) he should cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath-day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him." Acts 13:27.

The character of Jesus was no less accurately delineated. Isaiah had said of him: "He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth." Isa. 11:3, 4. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." Isa. 53:4. His life as described in the Gospels shows that he "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil;" and Matthew says that his healing the sick and casting out devils was in direct fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah. Thus: "And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. And he touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she arose, and ministered unto them. When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils; and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Matt. 8:14–17.

When John sent from prison to know if Jesus was indeed the

Christ, Jesus said: "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up;" and to crown all, he added, "and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Matt. 11:4, 5. This was in direct fulfillment of the prophecy uttered seven hundred years before: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." Luke 4:18, quoted from Isa. 61:1.

David was a prophet (Acts 2:29, 30), and many of his psalms, even when he used the first person, refer to Christ. We know that Jesus "came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11), and John further says of Jesus, that "neither did his brethren believe in him." John 7:5. This was in exact fulfillment of the prophetic utterance of David: "I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children." Ps. 69:8.

Just before the crucifixion of Christ, he went into Jerusalem, riding upon an ass's colt upon which no man had ever sat, and the multitudes went before him spreading their clothes and palm branches in the road over which he was to pass, and they, with those that followed after, cried, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David." "Blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. 21:9; John 12:13. But in the excitement of the occasion, none of the people thought that they were fulfilling the words written by the prophet Zechariah: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." Zech. 9:9.

"Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver." Matt. 26:14, 15. But neither Judas nor the priests stopped to think that in this very act they were fulfilling the words of Zechariah: "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver." Zech. 11:12.

Judas sat with Jesus at the last Passover. When the disciples asked Jesus who would betray him, "Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot." John 13:26. This was in direct fulfillment of the prophetic words of David: "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." Ps. 41:9; John 13:18.

BETHLEHEM.

"But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me; . . . whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Micah v. 2.

On that last night, as Jesus was talking with his disciples, he said: "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone." John 16:32. Although they all declared that they would stand by him, "all the disciples forsook him, and fled," when the multitude came with swords and staves, to seize him. In this was fulfilled the words of the prophet: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." Zech. 13:7. (See Matt 26:31.)

David said: "They that sit in the gate speak against me; I was the song of the drunkards." Ps. 69:12. This was no doubt literally true in his own case; but in this, as in many other things, he was a type of Christ, and the words found their complete fulfillment when the men of Herod's court, and the rabble that followed the high priest, set Jesus at naught, and mocked him, and spit upon him, and smote him with the palms of their hands, and when Pilate had him scourged. Matt. 26:67, 68; 27:26–30; Luke 23:11. And in this, also, was accurately fulfilled the prophetic saying of Isaiah: "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting." Isa. 50:6.

We have seen that the price which was paid to Judas for the betrayal of Jesus was foretold by Zechariah. But the prophet also told what should afterwards be done with the price of blood. The entire passage reads thus:—

"And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter; a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord." Zech. 11:12, 13.

Now note how remorse led Judas to complete the fulfillment of this prophecy:—

"Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in." Matt. 27:3–7.

The substitution of Jeremy (Jeremiah) for Zechariah, in verse 9, is undoubtedly due to an error of the transcriber, since the change of one letter would change the Hebrew of Zechariah into Jeremiah. This does not in the least degree affect the fulfillment of the prophecy. The prophecy was written, and was exactly fulfilled more than five hundred years afterward.

When Jesus was fastened to the cross, the nails were driven through his hands and his feet, and a spear was thrust into his side. John 19:34; 20:25. Hundreds of years before, the prophet David had foretold this, saying: "For dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet." Ps. 22:16.

"And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall." Matt. 27:33, 34. This was done in response to his words, "I thirst" (John 19:28–30), and was an exact fulfillment of Ps. 69:21, which reads: "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

"Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat; now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be; that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did." John 19:23, 24. More than a thousand years before this took place, the psalmist, prophetically putting himself in the place of Christ, had said: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." Ps. 22:18.

Isaiah, speaking of the time when Christ should pour out his soul unto death upon the cross, said, "And he was numbered with the transgressors." Isa. 53:12. This was fulfilled to the letter when Christ, like a vile malefactor, was hanged between two thieves. See Mark 15:27, 28.

In the psalm which has so many prophetic references to Christ, David said: "All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him." Ps. 22:7, 8. Notice how exactly this was fulfilled at the crucifixion of Christ:—

"And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God." Matt. 27 : 39–43.

In this act we see an illustration of the terribly blinding power of sin. The chief priests, the scribes, and the elders, were well versed in the Scriptures. Moses, the prophets, and the psalms were regularly read in all the synagogues; and every parent was under obligation to see that his children were well instructed in them. And yet they had steeled their hearts against the strivings of the Holy Spirit, until they could be the unconscious instruments in the fulfillment of prophecies with which they were perfectly familiar. They had received ample proof of the divinity of Christ, but had refused to accept it. They had determined not to believe that Jesus was the Christ, until they couldn't believe it. Once they had *known* that Christ was the Messiah, but would not acknowledge it. Now they no doubt actually thought him to be a base impostor. If he had come down from the cross, they would not have believed. The same result will be seen in the cases of those who refuse to believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, which proclaims his second advent. Said Paul: "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thess. 2 : 11, 12. Apt, indeed, is the expression, "The deceitfulness of sin."

In the Messianic psalm, from which we have before quoted, Jesus is prophetically represented as saying, "Reproach hath broken my heart." Ps. 69 : 20. The following from Dr. C. Geikie, with reference to Matt. 27 : 50; John 19 : 31–34, shows the fulfillment of this scripture:—

"That anyone should die so soon on the cross, especially one, like Jesus, in the prime of life, and unweakened by previous ill-health, and in such vigor to the last as to utter such a shriek as that with which he expired, appeared even to Christian antiquity, to imply some supernatural cause. But the mingled flow of blood and water seems to point unmistakably to another explanation. The immediate cause of death appears, beyond question, to have been the rupture of his heart, brought about by mental agony. Excess of joy or grief is known to induce the bursting of some division of the heart, and the consequent flow of blood into the pericardium, or bag, filled with colorless serum, like water, in which the heart is suspended. In ordinary cases, only examination after death discovers the fact, but in that of our Lord, the same end was answered by the thrust of the soldier's spear. In a death from heart rupture 'the hand is suddenly carried to the front of the chest,

and a piercing shriek uttered.' The hands of Jesus were nailed to the cross, but the appalling shriek is recorded. Jesus died, literally, of a broken heart."—*Life of Christ, chap. 63.*

Another prophecy was fulfilled by the events noted in John 19: 31–36, which we quote:—

"The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath-day (for that Sabbath-day was an high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs; but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."

In the instruction concerning the Passover lamb, the Jews were particularly warned never to let a bone of it be broken. Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12. That lamb typified Christ, for Paul says: "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." 1 Cor. 5:7. Now in the natural order of events, the legs of Jesus would have been broken, for this was the general custom in hastening the death of those who were crucified, and it was done to the two thieves. But the astonishingly speedy death of Jesus made this proceeding unnecessary, and thus the scripture remained unbroken.

The burial of Jesus is thus described:—

"When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple. He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in a rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulcher, and departed."

Thus was fulfilled the following prophecy:—

"And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." Isa. 53:9.

A casual reading of the above text would lead one to think that Christ made his grave both with the wicked and with the rich. On this text Barnes has the following comment, which brings out very beautifully the exactness with which the prophecy was fulfilled:—

"Hengstenberg renders it, 'They appointed him his grave with the wicked (but he was with a rich man after his death); although he had done nothing unrighteous, and there was no guile in his mouth.' The sense, according to him, is that not satisfied with his sufferings and death, they sought to insult him even in death, since they wished to bury his corpse among criminals. It is then incidentally remarked, that this object was not accomplished. . . . The word rendered 'he made,' from *nâthăn*, is a word of very frequent occurrence in the Scriptures. According to Gesenius, it means, (1) to *give*, as (*a*) to give the hand to a victor; (*b*) to give into the hand of anyone; . . . (*g*) to give into prison, or into custody. . . . The notion of giving, or giving over, is the essential idea of the word, and not that of *making*, as our translation would seem to imply; and the sense is, that he was *given by design* to the grave of the wicked, or it was intended that he should occupy such a grave."—*Barnes on Isa. 53: 9.*

The comment is extended at some length, but this is sufficient for our purpose. It is the most probable thing in the world that the Jews, who had insulted Jesus when alive, in every conceivable manner, and had subjected him to the most ignominious death, should design to put upon him the further indignity of being cast out without burial, just as was done with criminals. The first step toward this they took in ordering his legs to be broken; but as this design was frustrated, that the prophecy might be fulfilled, so was the other, and he had a most honorable burial. Instead of being thrown out among criminals, as his enemies designed, he was with the rich in his death. So impossible is it for men to frustrate the designs of God. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Ps. 76 : 10.

One more prophecy we have to notice, and it is a bright beam of light shining from the throne of God, through the tomb, presaging the glorious exaltation to the right hand of God. David said:—

"I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore." Ps. 16 : 8–11.

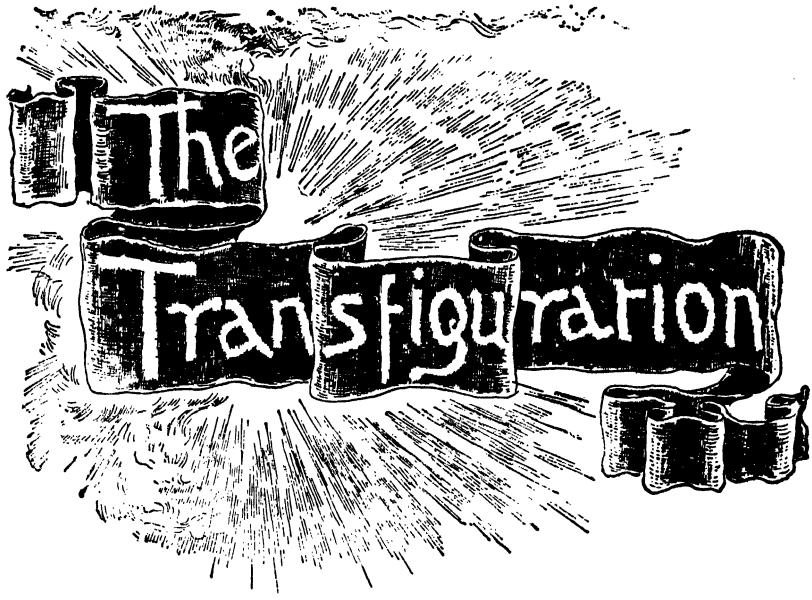
This was fulfilled in the short stay of Jesus in the tomb, which did not allow corruption to begin. The apostle Peter made this very plain on the day of Pentecost, when, after repeating the words quoted in the preceding paragraph, he said:—

"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us

unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool." Acts 2 : 29–35.

Thus we have briefly traced, both in prophecy and in corresponding history, the life of Christ from his birth in the manger to his exaltation to the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. We have only noted a few of the more prominent prophecies, yet all can readily see that their exact fulfillment furnished the apostles with an overwhelming argument to prove that the Jesus whom they preached was the Christ.

The Jews were rejected because they did not know the time of their visitation; because in their hardness of heart and blindness of mind, they misapplied and disregarded the prophecies which would have made them wise unto salvation. If such was their fate, what will be our lot, if we do not take good heed to all the prophecies which pertain to his *second* coming, in power and great glory, at "the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3 : 21), when he shall "give to every man according as his work shall be"?



The glory, the glory! around him are poured
Mighty hosts of the angels that wait on the Lord;
And the glorified saints and the martyrs are there,
Who in triumph their palm wreaths of victory wear.

WHEN Jesus had returned from healing the daughter of the Syro-Phœnician woman, and had reached the region of Cæsarea Philippi, he turned to his disciples, and very abruptly asked, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." Matt. 16:13, 14. These ideas that were held by different persons were no doubt derived from Deut. 18:18; Mal. 4:5. Besides this, it seems that there was a tradition that before the end some of the prophets would rise from the dead; men were looking for the Messiah at about the time of Christ's advent, but they had confounded the prophecies concerning his first and his second advent, and were looking for him to come in glory. Accordingly, some thought that Jesus might be one of the prophets risen from the dead as a pledge of the general resurrection. It is to be noted, however, as a mournful fact, that nobody is reported as saying that he was the Saviour of the world. So true it was that "he came unto his own, and his own received him not." John 1:11.

Again Jesus put the direct question, "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the

Son of the living God." Here was a recognition of Christ's real nature and mission. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,"—the Son of the Author of life,—conveying the same idea as in the confession recorded in John 6:68, 69: "Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." This confession of faith which Peter made on behalf of the disciples, must have been as a refreshing draught to Jesus, in view of the way in which he was regarded by the world at large.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona [Simon son of Jonas]; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven." No human being had revealed this wonderful truth to Peter; no human being *could* reveal it. For "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14. Says Paul: "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God." 2 Cor. 5:16–18. From these texts we learn that no matter how much one may have heard of Christ, he doesn't know him if he has not received the revelation which God alone can give by his Spirit. He who has this knowledge indeed, is a new creature. Many can testify that when Christ was revealed to them as the Saviour of sinners, and not merely of sinners in general, but of them in particular, it was in the place of secret prayer; or perhaps it was after hearing words, the like of which they had often before heard unmoved. And nothing could be more positive than the knowledge which is thus revealed. No argument could make it so plain, and no argument could make the individual doubt the knowledge thus revealed. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." John 3:8.

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Upon this we quote the following from Edersheim's "Life of Jesus the Messiah:"—

"Not less Jewish in form are the succeeding words of Christ: 'Thou art Peter (*Petros*), and upon this Rock (*Petra*) will I build my church.' We notice in the original the change from the masculine gender, 'Peter' (*Petros*), to the feminine, '*Petra*' ('Rock'), which seems the more significant, that *Petros* is used in Greek for 'stone,' and also sometimes for 'rock,' while *Petra* always means a 'rock.' The change of gender must therefore have a definite object which will

presently be more fully explained. Meantime we recall that, when Peter first came to Christ, the Lord had said unto him: 'Thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, Peter [*Petros*, a Stone, or else a Rock]'—the Aramaic word *Kepha* meaning, like Peter, both 'stone' and 'rock.' But both the Greek *Petros* and *Petra* have (as already stated) passed into Rabbinic language. Thus, the name *Peter*, or rather *Petros*, is Jewish, and occurs, for example, as that of the father of a certain Rabbi (*José bar Petros*). When the Lord, therefore, prophetically gave the name Cephas, it may have been that by that term he gave only a prophetic interpretation to what had been his previous name, Peter. This seems the more likely, since, as we have previously seen, it was the practice in Galilee to have two names, especially when the strictly Jewish name, such as Simon, had no equivalent among the Gentiles. Again, the Greek word *Petra*—Rock—('on this *Petra* [Rock] will I build my church') was used in the same sense in Rabbinic language."

"Believing that Jesus spoke to Peter in the Aramaic, we can now understand how the words *Petros* and *Petra* would be purposely used by Christ to mark the difference, which their choice would suggest. Perhaps it might be expressed in this somewhat clumsy paraphrase: 'Thou art Peter (*Petros*)—a Stone or Rock—and upon this *Petra*—the Rock, the *Petrine*—will I found my church.' If, therefore, we would not entirely limit the reference to the words of Peter's confession, we would certainly apply them to that which was the Petrine in Peter: the Heaven-given faith which manifested itself in his confession. And we can further understand how, just as Christ's contemporaries may have regarded the world as reared on the rock of faithful Abraham, so Christ promised that he would build his church on the Petrine in Peter—on his faith and confession."—*Vol. 2, book 3, chap. 37.*

Some have thought from the reading of Eph. 2 : 19, 20 that Christ referred, not to Peter alone, but to all the apostles, as the rock upon which his church should be built. That text reads: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." But 1 Cor. 3 : 10, 11 shows just how this should be taken. There the apostle Paul says: "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

This text teaches that Jesus Christ is the only foundation; he is not only the chief corner-stone, but the entire foundation. Then how could Paul say to the Ephesian brethren, that they were built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets? He means the foundation which the apostles and prophets laid, as he says in 1 Cor. 3 : 10, that is, Jesus Christ as the Life-giver and the Saviour of sinners. That this

is the foundation to which he refers, is proved by the second verse of the preceding chapter: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

This was the foundation which all the apostles laid, as Peter himself said after he had healed the lame man: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:10–12. And this was likewise the foundation of the prophets, as Peter further says: "To him [*i. e.*, to Jesus] give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43. Thus we see that the rock upon which Christ's church is founded, is belief from the heart in him as the one whose blood can cleanse from sin.

"And the gates of hell [*hades*, the grave] shall not prevail against it." This does not mean that the gates of the grave are carrying on an aggressive warfare against the church, hurling themselves against it in a vain endeavor to overthrow it. Gates do not "prevail" in that way, neither do men use gates as weapons of offense in warfare. Gates "prevail" against anyone when they effectually bar his passage. Now Christ is the Son of the living God; and "as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" (John 5:26), "that he should give eternal life" to as many as the Father should give him. See John 17:2. He says of himself, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell [*hades*, the grave] and of death." Rev. 1:18.

Satan has the power of death (Heb. 2:14); the grave is his prison-house, and all the dead he counts as his lawful prey, since death came because of sin. So he, as "a strong man armed keepeth his palace" (Luke 11:21), and "opened not the house of his prisoners." Isa. 14:17. But Christ is the stronger than he, who has come upon him, and overcome him, and passing through his prison-house, has carried away the keys, and will divide the spoils. Luke 11:22; Isa. 53:12. The saints of God may go into the grave; Satan may stir up persecution against them, and may slay them by the thousands; but the gates of the grave cannot prevail to hold a single soul that has been fastened to the eternal Rock. "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Immediately after Peter's confession of Christ, our Saviour said

to his disciples: "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Matt. 16:28. That our Saviour did not refer to his coming at the end of the world is evident from the fact that in his discourse on that event, in Matthew 24, he foretold a long period of persecution that was to intervene; and that he did not refer, as some have supposed, to the day of Pentecost or to the destruction of Jerusalem, nor to the spread of the gospel, is evident, because (1) Christ did not come in any sense of the word either at Pentecost or at the destruction of Jerusalem; (2) the spread of the gospel is not the coming of Christ, and (3) even if it were, the gospel work had already been begun by Christ and had indeed been carried on from the days of Abel.

In 2 Peter 1:16–18 we are set upon the track of that which our Saviour did really refer to in Matt. 16:28. That text reads as follows: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from Heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount."

The apostle here refers to the transfiguration scene, which took place about a week after Christ's statement found in Matt. 16:28, the account of which immediately follows those words. That account reads thus: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Matt. 17:1–5.

Remembering that Peter referred to this event as proving the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that it follows closely upon Christ's statement that some standing there should see him coming in his kingdom, and that just before he made that statement he was speaking of his second coming (Matt. 16:27), we must conclude that in the statement made in verse 28, Christ referred, not to his actual coming at the end of the world, but to a miniature representation of that coming, given to strengthen the faith of the disciples.

In his "Life of Our Lord" (p. 321), Samuel J. Andrews makes the following clear statement of the case:—

"The promise that some then standing before him should not taste death till they had seen 'the Son of man coming in his kingdom' (Matt. 16 : 28), or had seen 'the kingdom of God come with power' (Mark 9 : 1), was fulfilled when, after six days, he took Peter, James, and John into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them. These apostles now saw him as he should appear when, having risen from the dead, and glorified, he should come again from Heaven to take his great power and to reign. They saw in the ineffable glory of his person, and the brightness around them, a foreshadowing of the kingdom of God as it should come with power; and were for a moment 'eye-witnesses of his majesty.' 2 Peter 1 : 16. Many errors still remained to be removed from their minds, especially respecting the time of its establishment (Acts 1 : 6), but the great fact of its supernatural character they could not mistake."

Now let us briefly notice the details of this wonderful scene, to see how they agree with what we are told of the second coming of Christ in his kingdom.

1. "A cloud overshadowed them." So of Christ it is said, "Behold, he cometh with clouds." Rev. 1 : 7. At his ascension, while the disciples were talking with him, "he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Acts 1 : 9. And the angels afterward said to them: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Verse 11.

2. "His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." Mark says that "his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them;" and Luke says that "his raiment was white and glistering." So of Christ's coming we are told that it shall be "in the glory of his Father." One, prophetically describing that coming, says: "His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had bright beams out of his side." Hab. 3 : 3, 4, margin. John, who afterward had a view of his coming, said, "His eyes were as a flame of fire." Rev. 19 : 12. And Paul speaks of "the brightness of his coming" as being so great as to destroy the wicked. None but those who have been strengthened by the Lord can behold the glory of his coming and live.

3. When he comes the second time he comes to take his people to himself, and this he does by raising the righteous dead, and translating the living. Says Paul: "For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which

SITE OF CAPERNAUM.

"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell." Matt. xi. 23.

are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4 : 16, 17. Again he says: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Cor. 15 : 51, 52.

When Christ comes on his throne of glory, with a cloud of angels, to give reward to the righteous, there will be two great classes of them: those who shall be translated without seeing death, and those who shall be raised from the dead. These, when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, shall also appear with him in glory. Col. 3 : 4. Now representatives of these two classes were with him on the mount of transfiguration. If they had not been, it would not have been a true representation of the "power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," as Peter says it was. All Bible readers are familiar with the fact that Elijah (the Hebrew form of the name which in Greek is Elias) was translated without seeing death. See 2 Kings 2 : 1–11. The record says that as he and Elisha went on, and talked, "behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." So Elijah was there with Christ in the mount, as a representative of those who, when Christ comes, shall be caught up to meet the Lord without tasting death.

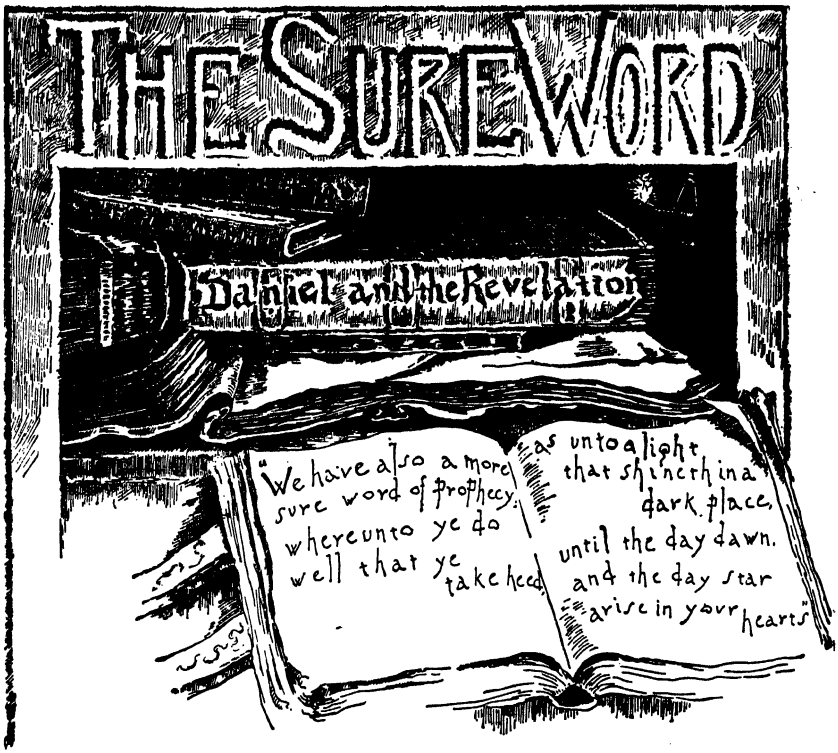
Concerning Moses, we have the record: "So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he [the Lord] buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor; but no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day." Deut. 34 : 5, 6. Turn now to Jude 9, where we read: "Yet Michael the Archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." What could cause a dispute between Christ (who is Michael) and the devil, concerning the body of Moses? Only this one thing, that the devil has the power of death (Heb. 2 : 14); he brought sin into the world, and death comes by sin; those who die he considers as his lawful prey, and he refuses to open the house of his prisoners (Isa. 14 : 16, 17), which is the grave. He is the strong man keeping guard over his house; but Christ is the stronger than he, who has entered into his house, overpowering him (Luke 11 : 21, 22), and who now has the keys of death and the grave. Rev. 1 : 18.

This power Christ gained by virtue of his death (Heb. 2: 14); but long before his death and resurrection he had this power through the

promise and the oath of God, which were the surety that he would be offered. Knowing these facts, and reading that Christ contended with the devil over the body of Moses, we are forced to the conclusion that their dispute was concerning the resurrection of Moses, Satan claiming that Christ had no right to take him. But in every contest with Satan, Christ has come off victorious, and so Moses was raised from the dead, and appeared with Christ on the holy mount, as the representative of those who, at the second coming of Christ, shall be brought from their graves to ever be with the Lord.

If there should still be a lingering doubt in the minds of any that Moses was really raised from the dead, and they should think that it was only his disembodied spirit that appeared on the mount, we will state (1) that the transfiguration is expressly declared by Peter to have been a representation of "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," and that at that time he and James and John were "eye-witnesses of his majesty," which shows that it was a view of Christ in his kingly glory; (2) it is absolutely certain that when Christ comes there will be no such thing as disembodied spirits, because, says Paul, he "shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3 : 21), and this change is performed for both the living and the dead. 1 Cor. 15 : 51. When the saints are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, it is with their own bodies glorified like the body of Christ. Therefore, (3) since, as shown above, the transfiguration was a representation, on a small scale, of this glorious event, it is certain that Moses must have been there in person, and not in shadow.

The transfiguration stands for us, as it did for the apostles, a sure pledge of Christ's second coming in power and great glory; and yet "we have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." 2 Peter 1 : 19. Let us study this sure word of prophecy, that we may walk in the light, and be prepared for the dawning of the "perfect day."



"A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic like the sun;
It gives a light to every age,
It gives, but borrows none."

—*Cowper.*

WE have seen that the transfiguration was a miniature representation of the coming of the Lord in glory, to raise the righteous dead, and to translate the living. Ever after that memorable day, the coming of the Lord must have been a more vivid reality to Peter, James, and John, than it had been before. Jesus said to them, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory," and now these three disciples could realize what that glory would be. They had been eye-witnesses of his majesty, and had beheld the glory of his coming.

Perhaps some may be inclined to say, "If I could have such evidence as that, I would have no doubt about the matter. If I could only see for myself, I should know that these things are so." Well now read what Peter says immediately after his reference to the transfiguration:—

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:19–21.

The revised version renders this verse as follows: "We have the word of prophecy made more sure;" but we cannot accept this rendering. Alford says that this rendering is on the ground,—

"That the comparative alludes to what has gone before as its *reason*, as if it had been said, *Wherefore*, or *Now*, or *Henceforth* we have, etc.; *i. e.*, 'on account of this voice from Heaven which we heard, we have firmer hold of, or esteem [possess] more sure, the prophetic word, as now having in our own ears begun its fulfillment.' The great objection to such a view is, the omission of any such connecting particles as those above supplied. It is true the apostle may have omitted them [as he certainly did, and, presumably, on purpose]; but even supposing that, it is further against the view, that if such be the force of the comparative, the thought is not at all followed up in the ensuing verses."—*New Testament for English Readers.*

It may be further said that nothing can make the word of prophecy more sure than it was when it first came from the lips of the holy men whom God inspired. The meaning is evidently exactly given in the common version, that the sure word of prophecy is more sure than any panoramic view can be. Our eyes may deceive us, but the word of God "liveth and abideth forever." It is something that is more sure than anything that man has seen; it is something that comes direct from "the Spirit of truth." Men's eyes may deceive them; but the word of prophecy does not depend upon any human faculty; it "came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Men were simply the unresisting mouth-pieces of the Spirit of God; it spoke the words, and they had no voice in the matter.

An instance of how the prophecy came not by the will of man, is afforded by the case of Balaam. It is true that Balaam was not a "holy man of God;" but the fact that he intended to pronounce a curse makes it more apparent that the prophecy came not by the will of man. Balaam was tempted by the promise of a great reward to go and curse Israel, but God, in his great love for his people, "turned the curse into a blessing." When Balak reproached Balaam for not cursing Israel, the latter replied, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either

good or bad of mine own mind; but what the Lord saith, that will I speak." Num. 24:13.

While Balaam was thus passive in the hands of the Lord, he uttered this prophecy: "I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh; there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city." Num. 24:17–19.

Here we have one instance of the "sure word of prophecy" concerning the coming of the Lord. Considering the circumstances under which it was uttered, it is a notable instance. It shows most fully that prophecy is something that has in it nothing of the human, but is wholly divine. No human frailty enters into it, but it comes direct from the Holy Spirit. Thus it is "more sure" than human eyesight. For this reason it is that it was said: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Still more ancient than the prophecy given through Balaam is the one uttered by Enoch. Jude speaks of the destruction of the wicked, and says (verses 14, 15): "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

The well-known prophecy uttered by Job is perhaps more ancient than that spoken by Balaam. After expressing a wish that his words might be graven in the enduring rock, he said: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19:25–27.

This prophecy brings to view the Christian's hope, namely, the resurrection of the dead at the coming of the Lord, showing that from the earliest times this was the hope of God's people. It was "the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers." Acts 26:6. But more explicit than any yet quoted, as showing "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," is the following by "the sweet psalmist of Israel," who could say, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." 2 Sam. 23:2. The word of the Lord, which was in his tongue, said:—

"The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is judge himself." Ps. 50:1-5.

Again the Lord spoke by him to the same intent: "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth; he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." Ps. 96:11-13.

Turning to the book of the prophet Isaiah, we read as follows, beginning with the tenth verse of the second chapter:—

"Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon everyone that is proud and lofty, and upon everyone that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low. . . . And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth."

This language certainly gives us a vivid idea of the "*power* and coming" of the Lord. But the holy man of God, whose lips were touched by a coal from God's own altar, was made the mouth-piece of a still more vivid description of the power that shall attend the coming of the Lord. Again the Holy Spirit moved him to say:—

"Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt, and they shall be afraid; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that

travaileth; they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger." Isa. 13:6–13.

Once more the Lord speaks through his servant:—

"Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled; for the Lord hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." Isa. 24:1–6.

Who these few men are that are left from the general destruction that overwhelms those who have transgressed the laws, is told through the same prophet in these words:—

"The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." Isa. 33:14–17.

That these righteous ones are the "few men" who are left after the day of the Lord has laid the land desolate, and destroyed the sinners out of it, is evident from our Saviour's words, recorded in Matt. 7:13, 14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Jeremiah was another "holy man of God," whom the Holy Ghost moved to speak. Like John the Baptist, he was chosen even before his birth to be a prophet unto the nations. When the Lord announced this fact to him (Jer. 1:4, 5), he said: "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." Verses 6, 7. And the prophet continues: "Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." Verse 9. What better credentials could any man have than this?

From lips burning with the touch of the almighty hand, Jeremiah poured forth the words "which the Holy Ghost teacheth;" and here is a portion of his word concerning "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:"—

"Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled; suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment. How long shall I see the standard, and hear the sound of the trumpet? For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding; they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end." Jer. 4:20–27.

We next turn to "the burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see," and read the following word concerning the power of the Lord's coming:—

"God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand [bright beams out of his side]; and there was the hiding

of his power." Hab. 3:3, 4. Compare with these words 2 Thess. 2:8: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." It is the glory of the Lord,—that glory which he received from the Father in the holy mount, and which he had with him before the world was,—that will destroy the sinners out of the earth when he comes. But we turn again to the words spoken through Habakkuk:—

"Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth; he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow; his ways are everlasting. . . . The mountains saw thee, and they trembled; the overflowing of the water passed by; the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high. The sun and moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear. Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thresh the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck." Hab. 3:5–13.

Now read from the word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah: "I will utterly consume all things from off the land, saith the Lord. I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumbling-blocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the Lord. I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the priests; and them that worship the host of heaven upon the house-tops; and them that worship and that swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham; and them that are turned back from the Lord; and those that have not sought the Lord, nor inquired for him." Zeph. 1:2–6.

Here we learn again that this destruction is not going to be a local affair. Although the prophecy came to the Jews, it was directed not only against those of them that turned back from the Lord and worshiped Baal and the host of heaven, but against "those that have not sought the Lord, nor inquired for him." In confirmation of this, we read again:—

"Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." Zeph. 3:8.

We close this list of quotations from the prophecies of the Old Testament, by a portion of "the burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi." Says the Lord through this prophet:—

"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap; and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years. And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against the false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. 3 : 1–5.

And after this solemn question and warning, the following view is presented, not only of the destruction that shall attend the coming of the Lord, but also of what shall follow that:—

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. 4 : 1–3.

Thus we have seen, although we have selected only a few instances, that the sure word of prophecy is fairly burdened with references to "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." More extended investigation would reveal the fact that the great body of prophecy was given for the sole purpose of giving instruction concerning either the first or the second advent of Christ. Thus the apostle Peter says to those who are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that it is,—

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; . . . receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently,

who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:7–11.

What the sufferings of Christ brought to mankind is known to all in so-called Christian lands, and to nearly all in the world. He suffered for sin, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." Through his spilled blood, all who believe on him may be justified freely by the grace of God, receiving the remission of sins; and being thus justified by faith, they will have peace with God. At Christ's first advent, he was made an offering for sin, and he "bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24); but when he comes the second time, he comes "without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28. Concerning this coming there is less knowledge among men than of the first; yet it brings the consummation of the gospel and of this world's history. Without "the glory that should follow," the sufferings of Christ would be to no purpose. But as we have seen, that glory which the justified and sanctified ones are to share with him (Rom. 8:17), when he comes, will also destroy the wicked. Therefore, since that event is of such overwhelming importance, how true the words that we "do well" to "take heed" to the sure word of prophecy "as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise."

This present age is called night. Says Paul, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." Rom. 13:12. And this he says in view of the fact previously stated, that it is high time to wake out of sleep, because our salvation is near. The dawning of the day, and the arising of the day-star, refer to the coming of Christ, who is "the bright and morning star." Rev. 22:16. So Isaiah, like Paul, tells of the night of darkness, and the coming of the dawn. Looking with prophetic sight down the ages, he says:—

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isa. 60:1–3.

This is commonly applied simply to the spread of the gospel; but what follows, taken in connection with parallel passages in the New Testament, shows that the prophet saw the triumph of the gospel in the final destruction of the wicked, and the salvation of the righteous in the New Jerusalem. Read the following and compare with the twenty-first of Revelation:—

"Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despise thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel." "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." Isa. 60: 11–14, 18–21.

The dawning of the day, and the rising of the day-star, will be when the glory of the Lord shall fill the earth, and the people shall be righteous. This present time is night because the darkness of sin covers the people. In the midst of this night, our only light is that which shines from God's word. David said: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Ps. 119: 105. The lamp of prophecy, lighted from the glory that surrounds the throne of God, sheds its beams amidst the darkness that overspreads the earth, and is the wayfaring man's only guide till the glory of the Lord shall arise in full splendor upon him. Whosoever takes heed to it, his path shall be "as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Prov. 4: 18.

The third chapter of the second epistle of Peter contains some positive evidence concerning the sure word of prophecy, which, as we have seen, points out the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The chapter opens with the statement that the epistle is written for the purpose of stirring the brethren up to take heed to "the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets." There is special reason for this admonition, because just before the end, the darkness will be more intense, as the apostle Paul says, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." 2 Tim. 3: 13. And

these evil men will scoff, saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." 2 Peter 3:4. That this is a falsehood, and that they ought to know better if they do not, Peter declares in the next two verses, saying:—

"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."

The phrase, "the earth standing out of the water and in the water," does not well express the idea of the original. The Greek word which in the common version is rendered "standing," should, as the margin indicates, be rendered "consisting." Robinson's "Lexicon of the New Testament" says of the word: "To *place together* parts into a whole, *i. e.*, to constitute, to create, to bring into existence. Hence in N. T., intransitive, *to be constituted, created; to exist*," as in Col. 1:17, "By him all things *consist*." Wakefield translates the passage thus: "A heaven and earth formed out of water and by means of water." Bloomfield says; "The earth . . . being formed out of water, and consisting by means of water." Murdock's translation of the Syriac has it: "The earth rose up from the waters, and by means of water, by the word of God." The meaning is that the earth in its chaotic state was simply a watery mass, as indicated by Gen. 1:2: "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the *deep*. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the *waters*."

"Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." When God gathered the waters together into one place, and made the dry land appear, he evidently stored large quantities of water in the interior of the earth. This is indicated in the second commandment, by the phrase, "The water under the earth," and by Ps. 136:6, "To him that stretched out the earth above the waters," and also by Ps. 24:1, 2. In the flood which destroyed the earth in the days of Noah, the waters in the interior of the earth united with the rain from heaven, as the record says: "The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." Gen. 7:11. The idea of the passage in Peter's epistle is that the very element from which the earth was formed, was made to contribute to its destruction. Having disproved the assertion that all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation, the apostle draws a parallel, thus:—

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word

[the word of God, see verse 5] are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Peter 3:7. Instead of "are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of Judgment," a better translation would be, "stored with fire, reserved unto the day of Judgment." Now the comparison is at once apparent. By the word of God, the earth in the beginning was formed from the watery mass which God had spoken into existence. Part of this water was stored up in the earth, and by the word of God was afterward caused to overflow the earth and contribute to its destruction. And the same word of God, which performed this, has stored the interior of this present earth with fire, and is keeping it till the day of Judgment, when, as in the case of the waters of the flood, the fire within the earth, uniting with that which comes down from God out of Heaven (Rev. 20:9), will destroy it.

Particular attention should be given to the word "kept." Instead of all things continuing as they were from the beginning of the creation, the earth has within it the elements of its destruction, and it is only the power of God that stays the catastrophe.

Some have fancied that this chapter teaches that the earth will be annihilated at the Judgment-day. This is a mistake. This earth will be destroyed in the same sense that the original earth "perished" by the waters of the earth. It was all broken up, and the face of it was changed, so that the earth after the flood had no resemblance to the earth before the flood. This was the last and greatest curse caused by sin, and completed the desolation of the earth. But the matter which composed the earth was not destroyed. So by the fires of the last day "the elements shall melt with fervent heat," but they will not be annihilated. From those melted elements, "new heavens and a new earth" will be formed, which will have no more resemblance to this sin-cursed earth than this earth does to Eden, the garden of God. The people that shall dwell in it will all be righteous (Isa. 60:21); and "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." Isa. 35:1, 2.

The "sure word of prophecy" tells us again and again that this earth shall be destroyed by fire, and that in that fire the ungodly shall be burned up. Scoffers say that they see no evidence that any such event will ever take place; but the apostle Peter assures us that the instrument of the earth's destruction is already prepared, and is stored within it. Just as surely as the earth was once destroyed by water, so surely will it again be destroyed by fire.

THE DEAD SEA.

"Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He hath made in the earth." Ps. xlvi. 8.

"But these prophecies were spoken hundreds, and some of them thousands, of years ago, and there is no more evidence of their fulfillment now than there was when they were uttered." Thus argues the scoffer; but it is a vain argument, for two reasons. In the first place, all the evidence goes to show that there is now far more prospect of their speedy fulfillment than there was when they were uttered. The truth of the statement that "the earth shall wax old like a garment" may be verified by any close observer. The earth is wearing out. Take, for example, the land of Palestine. When the children of Israel were in Egypt, that wonderfully fertile country, the Lord promised them a land "flowing with milk and honey" (Ex. 3:8), a land better than Egypt (Deut. 11:10, 11), "a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it." Deut. 8:7–9. Hundreds of years later the prophet Ezekiel called it a land "flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands" (Eze. 20:6, 15); our Saviour's parable affords evidence that the land would yield thirty, sixty, and a hundred fold (Matt. 13:8); and when God would describe the beauty and richness of the new earth, he said, "The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon." Isa. 35:2.

But how is it now? A traveler, who has written a good description of Eastern lands, says:—

"Of all the lands there are for dismal scenery, I think Palestine must be the prince. The hills are barren, they are dull of color, they are unpicturesque in shape. The valleys are unsightly deserts fringed with a feeble vegetation, that has an expression about it of being sorrowful and despondent." "Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies."

And what is true of that country is true in less degree of other countries. The waxing old of the earth is more marked in Palestine, because of its original superior fertility.

But even allowing that there were no visible tokens of the approach of the time when this earth shall as a vesture be folded up and changed, it would still be a vain thing to say that it must be long ere God's sure word can be fulfilled, because of the truth of the following statement:—

"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." 2 Peter 3:8.

God "inhabiteth eternity." The flight of time makes no difference with his plans. Compared with his eternity, the entire six thousand years of earth's existence is but a span. Says the psalmist, "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." Ps. 90:4. Therefore the apostle concludes that "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness." That which seems to men forgetfulness of the promise, is only a kindly delay to allow dilatory men to secure the promise. In God's reckoning, it is only as the three days' grace which men allow for the payment of a promissory note.

It should not be forgotten that while a thousand years is with the Lord as one day, one day is as a thousand years. This is too often overlooked. While he may take a thousand years for the fulfillment of a promise, and then it will be the same as though performed the next day, he can do in one day the work of a thousand years. Therefore there is no warrant for settling down to carnal ease, thinking that it will necessarily be a long time yet before the work of God on earth can be accomplished. "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Rom. 9:28.

'This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" Isa. 14:26, 27.

WHEN Paul and Barnabas were trying to persuade the people of Lystra to turn from the vanities of idolatry, they said unto them that although God "suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." These are some of the means by which God witnesses of himself to all nations. The prophet Isaiah sets forth the absurdity and inexcusableness of idolatry, by simply showing how a god is made. A man plants a tree, which the rain nourishes until it has grown large enough to be used; then he cuts it down, and with part of it he makes a fire, by which he warms himself and cooks his food, and the residue he makes into a god, and falls down to it and worships it, and cries to it, "Deliver me; for thou art my god." Isa. 44·14–17. Then the prophet shows where such people fail to use the common sense that belongs with nature itself. Since the rain nourishes the tree from which he makes his god, why does he not worship the power that gives the rain, if he does not know who God is? If he would but do that, he would be walking in the light of common sense, of reason, and of faith, and would soon find God more perfectly. Men who do not do so are without excuse. (See Rom. 1:20.)

But it is not alone by the giving of rain and fruitful seasons that God has "left not himself without witness." He has done it by revelation, and through living testimony. When Egypt stood at the head of the world in power, wisdom, and influence, God made manifest in that land his power and his glory in such a way that all the nations heard of it. The Canaanites heard of it, and knew that the God that delivered Israel was God of Heaven and earth. Josh. 2:9–11.

The next nation that arose to power and influence in the world was Assyria. And when Assyria had grown corrupt and had gone far away from God, the Lord graciously sent a Hebrew prophet to the people, and called them to repentance. Jonah 1:2, 3. After this, again and again, he bore witness to Assyria that he is God above all, the most notable instance, perhaps, being the slaughter of the host of Sennacherib. Isaiah 37.

Babylon next spread her empire over all nations, and to them God left not himself without witness. He bore witness directly to Nebuchadnezzar, in the dream of the great image, and its interpretation by Daniel, the captive Hebrew. Again in the affair of the three Hebrews and the fiery furnace, God bore witness of himself to all the power and all the provinces of that mighty empire, both by the representatives that were present (Dan. 3:3), and also by the decree of the king, which followed. Verse 29. Again when Nebuchadnezzar, after being warned of God (Dan. 4:4–27), was driven out from the presence of men to run wild for seven years, he learned by it that Jehovah rules in the affairs of men, and that he is above all gods; and when he recovered his understanding, he published "unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth," that he "thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God" had wrought. Verses 1, 2. Again, when that empire was on the brink of ruin, God, by the handwriting on the wall of the palace, bore a last parting witness to the lascivious king, that he was weighed in the balances and found wanting, and that his kingdom was given to the Medes and Persians. Dan. 5:27, 28.

The power of Media and Persia came after, and through that power, also, God again bore witness of himself "unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth." Daniel, the servant of God, was cast into a den of lions, and came forth unhurt, because God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths that they should do him no hurt. "Then King Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth," that the God of Daniel "is the living God, and steadfast forever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end." Dan.

6:25, 26. When Cyrus reigned, he also "made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, the Lord God of Heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (*he is the God*)."

When Alexander the Great was in the full tide of his career of conquest, he stood at the temple of the Most High in Jerusalem, and heard the witness of God concerning himself read from the Hebrew Scriptures. And through the Greek language, which the career of Alexander was instrumental in spreading throughout all the Eastern world, God chose to give witness of himself in the salvation wrought for man in the death and resurrection of his own dear Son.

When Rome ruled the world, God not only left not himself without witness, in the preaching of the gospel to every nation under heaven, but also by the apostle Paul he bore witness more than once to the head of the Roman world himself. And from that day to this, God has left not himself without witness to all nations.

Nor was it only to these great empires and nations that the Lord bore witness of himself. In Jer. 27:2–11 is the copy of a message from the Lord that was written by the prophet Jeremiah, and was sent "to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon." The time would fail us to tell of all the testimonies that God bore by Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and Joel, and Amos, and Obadiah, and Zephaniah, and Zechariah, not only to Assyria, and Babylon, and Egypt, and Medo-Persia, but also to Edom, and Moab, and Ammon, and Tyre, and Zidon, and Syria, and Arabia, and all the nations round about. It is literally true that God has "left not himself without witness" unto "all nations" in all ages. And when in that great day of the Lord the great trumpet shall be blown, there shall gather before the glorious throne of the Most High God, "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," and will cry "with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

Prophecy, the foretelling of events, is one of the evidences which God has given to show that it is God who has spoken, and that men might believe. "Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I showed it thee; lest thou

shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them; and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them." Isa. 48:4, 5.

The Lord utters this as a challenge to all who deny his power: "Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the king of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen; let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods." Isa. 41:21–23. Thus it is shown that prophecy is an attribute of Deity. "Show the things that are to come hereafter, *that we may know that ye are gods.*" From this it is evident that the power to show the things that are to come belongs to God alone, and by the following text it is made yet more evident: "Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done." Isa. 46:9–11.

Although it is interesting to study the great lines of prophecy which show the rise of the successive empires and kingdoms of the world, it is no less interesting to study the prophecies concerning individual nations and particular cities. In all of them God has borne witness of himself, of his power and his wisdom; but the history of Tyre is remarkable in its fulfillment of prophecy.

Tyre, "whose antiquity is of ancient days" (Isa. 23:7), was founded by a colony from Sidon (verse 12), about twenty-five miles south of the mother city on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. It was "planted in a pleasant place" (Hosea 9:13), and in the days of Isaiah, 715 B. C., she was "the crowning city," "a mart of nations," and her merchants were princes, and her "traffickers" were "the honorable of the earth." As early as the time of Jehoram, 904–896 B. C., Tyre, in company with the Philistines, invaded the land of Judah and took silver and gold and "goodly pleasant things" and carried them into her temples; "the children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem" she sold unto the Grecians that she might remove them far from their borders. Joel 3:4–6. Amos 1:6, 9; 2 Chron. 21:16, 17.

The builders of Tyre were so accomplished that they are said to "have perfected her beauty." A thousand years before Christ, when Solomon was about to build the temple of God in Jerusalem, he wrote to Hiram, the king of Tyre, saying: "Send me now therefore a man cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill to grave with the cun-

ning men that are with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, whom David my father did provide. Send me also cedar trees, fir trees, and algum trees, out of Lebanon; for I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon; and, behold, my servants shall be with thy servants, even to prepare me timber in abundance; for the house which I am about to build shall be wonderful great." King Hiram answered: "I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding, of Hiram my father's, the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre, skillful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him." 2 Chron. 2:7–9, 13, 14.

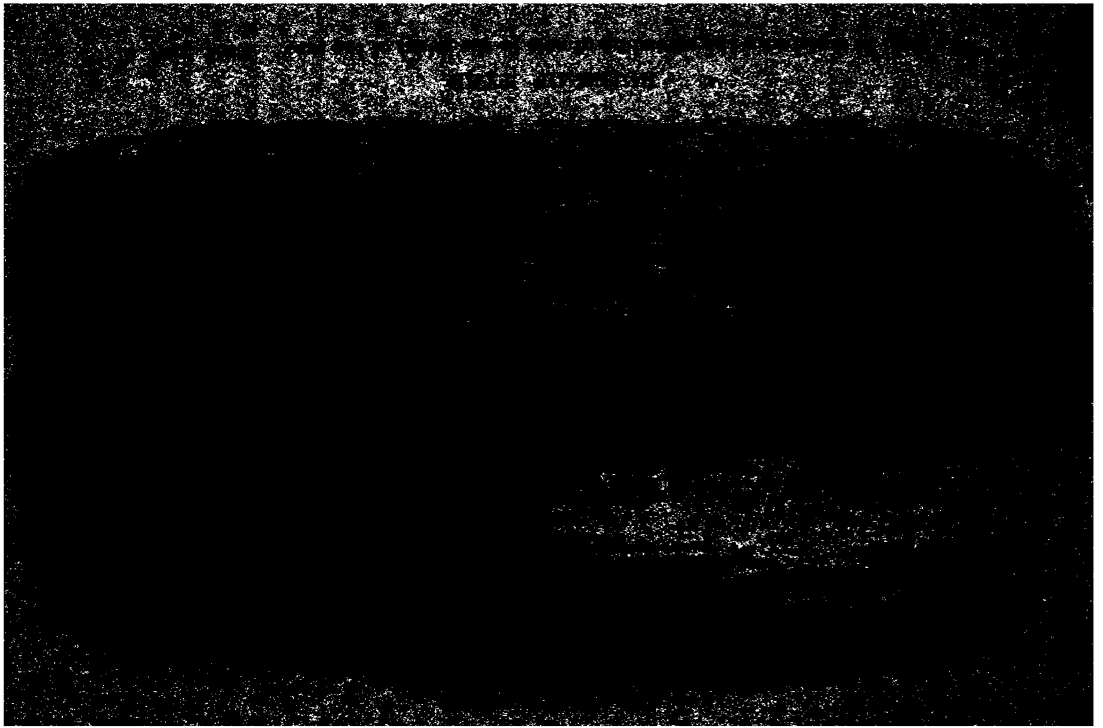
Five hundred and eighty-eight years before Christ, Tyre was so rich that she could afford to make all her shipboards of fir, and their masts of cedar of Lebanon; their oars of oak of Bashan, and their benches of ivory; their sails of fine linen with broidered work from Egypt, and their coverings of blue and purple from the isles of Elishah. The inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad were her mariners, her own wise men were her pilots, and her army was hired from Persia, Lud, Phut, and Arvad. Her traffic was so great that she enjoyed a continual "world's fair."

Because of the multitude of all kind of riches, and the multitude of the wares of her own making, Tarshish came to trade in her fairs with silver, iron, tin, and lead. Javan, Tubal, and Meshech (Greece, Libya, and Russia) came with persons of men and vessels of brass. The house of Togarmah (Armenians) came with horses, horsemen, and mules. Dedan (bordering on the Persian Gulf) came with horns of ivory and ebony, and with precious clothes for chariots. Syria came with emeralds, purple and broidered work, and fine linen, and coral, and agate. Damascus came with the wine of Helbon and white wool; Judah and Israel with wheat, and honey, and oil, and balm; Arabia came with lambs, and rams, and goats; Sheba and Raamah (parts of Arabia) came with chief of all spices, and with precious stones and gold; Babylonia and Assyria came with all sorts of things in blue clothes and broidered work, chests of rich apparel bound with cords and made of cedar; and she enriched the kings of the earth with the multitude of her riches and her merchandise. See Ezekiel 27.

And yet for all this, she coveted more. As though this was not enough, she envied Jerusalem the trade that passed through her gates; and when Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, Tyre rejoiced and exultingly exclaimed, "Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people; she is turned unto me; I shall be replenished, now she is

laid waste." Eze. 26:2. Then it was that Ezekiel uttered the following prophecy concerning Tyre: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God. . . . For thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people. He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field; and he shall make a fort against thee, and cast a mount against thee, and lift up the buckler against thee. And he shall set engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers. By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee; thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach. With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets; he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground." Eze. 26:3–11.

When this prophecy was spoken, Ezekiel was at Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar had just completed the destruction of Jerusalem, B. C. 587. Soon afterward Nebuchadnezzar invaded Phenicia, and all the towns hastily submitted, except Tyre, which made such stout resistance that it required of the armies of Nebuchadnezzar a siege of thirteen years, from 585, to take it. The main part of the city was on the mainland, but on an island about a half mile from the mainland, there was the temple of the chief god of the Tyrians, and there was a considerable settlement on the island also. Although the siege lasted so long, and was so persistently pressed that by the continuous wearing of the helmet "every head was made bald," and by the constant working of the battering-rams "every shoulder was peeled," yet the city was finally utterly ruined. And although they at last acknowledged the authority of Nebuchadnezzar, "Yet he had no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it" (Eze. 29:18), because the remnant of the people removed with all their valuables to the island. By the work of Nebuchadnezzar there was fulfilled that part of the prophecy which said that they should destroy the walls and break down the towers, and that with the hoofs of their horses they should tread down all her streets; but there were yet two important statements unfulfilled; these were: (1) "I will also scrape her dust from



her, and make her like the top of a rock;" (2) "and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water." This part of the prophecy, however, was as perfectly fulfilled as was the other, and it was accomplished in this way:—

After its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, the Tyrians rebuilt the city, but they rebuilt it on the island instead of on the mainland, and left the old city lying in its ruins. The new city in the course of time regained much of the glory that had so exalted the old, and one of her principal articles of traffic was fish, for when Nehemiah was rebuilding Jerusalem, B. C. 445, he says: "There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the Sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem." Neh. 13:16. It was built very strong, being "completely surrounded by prodigious walls, the loftiest portion of which on the side fronting the mainland reached a height not less than a hundred and fifty feet." Thus it stood, a mighty city, when, in 332 B. C., Alexander the Great, in his course of conquest, was compelled also to besiege it, or leave behind him a most powerful enemy. He determined to take the city, and accordingly began "one of the most remarkable sieges ever recorded," which lasted seven months. When Alexander determined to besiege the city he had no fleet, and as the city lay wholly on an island nearly a half a mile from the mainland, with the water eighteen feet deep, the prospect of his taking it would seem to have been not the most promising; nevertheless he began the work at once.

His first move was to build a solid mole two hundred feet broad from the mainland to the wall of the city, and, says Grote, "he had stones in abundance" from Old Tyre, for the work. And here was the perfect, literal fulfillment of the prophecy, spoken more than two hundred and fifty years before, that "they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water;" for to make that mole the troops of Alexander the Great did literally lay the stones and the timber and the dust of Old Tyre in the midst of the water.

Nor was that all, for the prophecy had also said that they should "*scrape* her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock." There was abundance of material there to have made the mole as first designed, only two hundred feet broad, without any very close scraping, if all had gone well. But the channel was exposed to the full blast of the wind, and the work was often broken by the heavy waves. Besides this, as soon as the Tyrians began to see that the enterprise really threatened them, they applied all their power and ingenuity to defeat it by annoying the builders, burning the timbers, and breaking down the mole and scattering the stones in the water. And when, even

against all these hindrances, the mole had been carried almost to the city wall, on a stormy day the Tyrians, pouring out their whole naval force in ships and little boats of all kinds, drove a great fire-ship loaded with the most combustible materials against the two great protective towers that defended the advancing mole, setting them on fire, while at the same time every Tyrian that could get in a damaging blow at the mole itself did so. They burnt the towers, drove off the workmen, tore out the woodwork that held the mole together, and the waves being dashed against it, the greater part of the structure was broken to pieces and sank in the sea.

It then became necessary to begin the mole nearly new, but, nothing daunted, Alexander at once set to work not only to rebuild the mole, but to make it broader and stronger than before. Of course the work that had been destroyed formed a good foundation upon which to make the new one both broader and stronger. But every reverse made it necessary to have more stones and especially more dust, and so it came about that in the very nature of the case the builders were compelled to literally "scrape" the dust from Old Tyre, and at the last to leave her "like the top of a rock."

But even yet there was one more word of prophecy unfulfilled: "Thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon," and it is evident that this refers to the city on the island rather than to that on the mainland, for another passage says, "It shall be a place for the spreading of nets *in the midst of the sea.*" Eze. 26 : 14, 5. This was not fulfilled by the capture of the city by Alexander. Although he took the city he did not destroy it, and although Alexander sold many of the people into slavery, yet the place was soon repeopled, and regained much prosperity. Under Roman rule Tyre was a free city till the reign of Augustus, who for seditious conduct deprived her of this liberty. At that time she is described by Strabo as a city of great wealth, which was chiefly derived from dyeing and selling the Tyrian purple. He also says that the houses consisted of many stories, even of more than in the houses at Rome. It is often mentioned in the Gospels, and there was a company of Christians there with whom Paul stayed a week as he made his last journey to Jerusalem. Acts 21 : 3, 4. The number of Christians multiplied till Tyre became the seat of a bishop in the second century. And in the fourth century Jerome called it the noblest and most beautiful city of Phenicia, and wondered at what seemed to be the non-fulfillment of the prophecy that pronounced its desolation. In the time of the crusades it sustained a long siege, and was taken in 1124, and was made an archbishopric; but from the conquest of Syria by Selim I., A. D. 1516, its decline was rapid, and soon its ruin became complete.

In A. D. 1610–11 it was visited by Sandys, the traveler, who said: "This once famous Tyre is now no other than a heap of ruins; yet they have a reverent aspect, and do instruct the pensive beholder with their exemplary frailty." In 1697 Maundrell visited it and said of it: "On the north side is an old Turkish ungarrisoned castle, besides which you see nothing here but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, etc., there being not so much as one entire house left; its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harboring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly upon fishing."

In 1751 Hasselquist was there, and said: "We . . . came to Tyre, now called Zur, where we lay all night. None of these cities, which formerly were so famous, are so totally ruined as this, except Troy. Zur now scarcely can be called a miserable village, though it was formerly Tyre, the queen of the sea. Here are about ten inhabitants, Turks and Christians, who live by fishing." About 1780 Volney was there, and said: "The whole village of Tyre contains only fifty or sixty families, who live obscurely on the produce of their little ground, and a trifling fishery."

In 1820 Jolliffe wrote of it: "Some miserable cabins ranged in irregular lines, dignified with the name of streets, and a few buildings of a rather better description, occupied by the officers of government, compose nearly the whole town." And in 1838 Dr. Robinson spent a Sunday there, and wrote of it thus: "I continued my walk along the shore of the peninsula [formed by the mole of Alexander the Great], part of which is now unoccupied, except as a place to spread nets upon, musing upon the pride and fall of ancient Tyre. Here was the little isle once covered by her palaces, and surrounded by her fleets; but alas! thy riches and thy fame, thy merchandise, thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers and the occupiers of thy merchandise that were in thee—where are they? Tyre has indeed become like the top of a rock. The sole tokens of her ancient splendor—columns of red and gray granite, sometimes forty or fifty heaped together, or marble pillars—lie broken and strewed beneath the waves in the midst of the sea; and the hovels that now nestle upon a portion of her site, present no contradiction of the dread decree, 'Thou shalt be built no more.'" And those who have visited it since "all concur in the account of its general aspect of desolation."

Thus the word uttered by Ezekiel two thousand four hundred and seventy-four years ago, concerning Tyre, has been completely and literally fulfilled. Ezekiel said that they should break down her walls and destroy her pleasant palaces. Fifteen years afterward it was done. Ezekiel said they should lay her stones and her timber and her dust in

the midst of the water, and they should scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. Two hundred and fifty-five years afterward it was done. Although the city was rebuilt in the midst of the sea, Ezekiel said in 587 B. C. that Tyre should be like the top of a rock, and should be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea. That is what she was in A. D. 1697, and that is what she is at the present time, and she shall be built no more. The word spoken by Ezekiel, 587 B. C., is the word of God. Empires perish, nations fall, cities are brought to ruin, the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever.

THE BURDEN OF EGYPT.

Egypt was one of the very first of nations to attain to power and civilization. She attained to such a height of power that for ages she was the strongest nation in the world; and to such a height of civilization that "the wisdom of the Egyptians" was proverbial even among the wisest people in the world. It was a commendable qualification in Moses that he "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." And the Scripture, after stating that "God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore," proceeds to give the measure, or at least some sort of an idea, of it, by adding, "And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East country, and all the wisdom of Egypt." 1 Kings 4:29, 30.

Egypt was invaded, and, in fact, subdued by Esarhaddon and Asshur-bani-pal, the last of the great kings of Assyria; but she soon recovered strength, and not only assisted Babylonia and Media in the utter destruction of the Assyrian kingdom, but also received as her share all the Assyrian possessions west of the Euphrates, with her stronghold at Charchemish on the Euphrates. 2 Kings 23:29; 2 Chron. 35:20, 21. In a few years, however, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took all these possessions, even as far as to the very border of Egypt itself. "And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land; for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt." 2 Kings 24:7. This was in B. C. 598. But yet the king of Egypt was "like a young lion of the nations," and "as a whale in the seas," and in 588–586, Ezekiel took up a lamentation for Egypt, and declared that her ruin should come as the ruin of Assyria had gone before. Egypt was given to Nebuchadnezzar by the Lord, for the service which he wrought in the destruction of Tyre, and the spoil of Egypt was the wages of Nebuchadnezzar's army, for their work which they did for the

Lord in the ruin of Tyre. Eze. 29:18–20. The secret of this was that Egypt had helped Tyre in her resistance.

We have not space to notice all the prophecies concerning Egypt, but the following passage of Scripture is worthy of special notice:—

"Thus saith the Lord God: I will also make the multitude of Egypt to cease by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. He and his people with him, the terrible of the nations, shall be brought to destroy the land; and they shall draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with the slain. And I will make the rivers dry, and sell the land into the hand of the wicked; and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers; I the Lord have spoken it. Thus saith the Lord God: I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt; and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt." Eze. 30:10–13.

We have none of the particulars of Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Egypt. It is known, however, that he did invade it twice, and that he was thoroughly successful, and carried large numbers of the Egyptians captive to Babylon. But aside from this, there are three points in the above quotation which stand forth in such perfect fulfillment that no objection can justly be made by any man, to the faithfulness of the word spoken by the prophet Ezekiel nearly twenty-five hundred years ago. We shall notice them in reverse order, taking the last one first.

1. "There shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt." Although Egypt was subdued by Esarhaddon and Asshur-bani-pal, by Nebuchadnezzar, and by Cambyses, the Egyptians still ruled within the country itself. But in B. C. 344 Ochus of Persia invaded the land with three hundred and forty-four thousand troops, while the Egyptian king Nectanebo had an army of only one hundred thousand with which to meet him, and twenty thousand of these were Greek mercenaries. The king of Persia was wholly successful. "All Egypt submitted to Ochus, who demolished the walls of the cities, plundered the temples, and after amply rewarding his mercenaries, returned to his own capital with an immense booty." "Nectanebo in despair quitted the country and fled southward to Ethiopia," and from that day till this there has been no native ruler of Egypt. Nectanebo was the last Egyptian king that Egypt ever had.

"Thus miserably fell the monarchy of the Pharaohs after an unexampled duration of nearly three thousand years. . . . More than two thousand years have since passed, and though Egypt has from time to time been independent, not one native prince has sat on the throne of the Pharaohs. 'There shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt' (Eze. 30:13) was prophesied in the days of Apries [the

Pharaoh-hophra of Jer. 44:30] as the final state of the land."—*Encyclopedia Britannica, art. Egypt.*

Beside the princes of the monarchy itself, there were "local princes" throughout Egypt; these continued for about twelve years, to the time when Alexander the Great took possession of Egypt, and then they too disappeared.

"With Alexander, the Macedonian dominion began. . . . From this time the Egyptian local princes, who for five centuries, except only during the rule of Psametik and his house, had caused all the divisions of Egypt, *disappear from the scene.*"—*Ib.*

Thus the word has been literally fulfilled that "there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt."

2. "I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease." This is a most remarkable prediction, for of all nations that have ever lived on the earth, the Egyptians were the most abundantly idolatrous. Bodies heavenly and bodies earthly, bodies animate and bodies inanimate, real and imaginary, fish, flesh, fowl, and vegetable, all were worshiped as gods in Egypt; and it was literally true that in Egypt it was easier to find a god than a man. "The basis of their religion was Nigritian fetichism, the lowest kind of nature worship. . . . The fetichism included, besides the worship of animals, that of trees, rivers, and hills." The principal gods, such as Phtah, Ra, Shu, Isis, Osiris, etc., numbered up into the hundreds. Of the animals universally sacred, the principal were cows and heifers, apes, ibises, cats, hawks, asps, and dogs. Others, whose worship was more local, were lions, crocodiles, wolves, jackals, shrew-mice, hippopotami, antelopes, ibexes, frogs, goats, vultures, fish, ichneumons, and others too numerous to mention.

Yet as numerous as the idols were, and as base as the idolatry was, the idols have been totally destroyed and the images have ceased utterly.

3. "I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers." All history from the conquest of Egypt by Ochus, before mentioned, till this day, bears continuous testimony to the literal fulfillment of this prophecy. From the day that King Nectanebo fled into Ethiopia till now, strangers have spoiled Egypt of her wealth and drained her of her treasures. When Alexander the Great had defeated Darius at Issus, he was welcomed by Egypt as a deliverer. In the final division of Alexander's dominion, Egypt fell to Ptolemy the Macedonian, and he and his successors ruled and rifled it for two hundred and ninety-four years. It fell next under the dreadful dominion of Rome, whose iron hand held it for six hundred and seventy years, until

A. D. 641. Then the Saracens took it and spoiled it for six hundred years. In 1250 the Mamalukes seized it, and held it two hundred and sixty-seven years, and "if you consider the whole time that they possessed the kingdom, especially that which was nearer the end, you will find it filled with wars, battles, injuries, and rapines."—*Pococke.* In A. D. 1517 the Turks conquered the Mamalukes, and took possession of the whole country, which they still hold. And a hundred years ago, Gibbon, in describing the condition of Egypt under their rule, stated not only what is still its condition, but gave the best statement in existence of the fulfillment of the prophecy. He said:—

"A more unjust and absurd constitution cannot be devised, than that which condemns the natives of a country to perpetual servitude, under the arbitrary dominion of strangers and slaves. Yet such has been the state of Egypt above five hundred years. The most illustrious sultans of the Baharite and Borgite dynasties, were themselves promoted from the Tartar and Circassian bands; and the four and twenty beys, or military chiefs, have ever been succeeded, not by their sons, but by their servants. They produce the great charter of their liberties, the treaty of Selim the First with the republic; and the Othman emperor still accepts from Egypt a slight acknowledgment of tribute and subjection."—*Decline and Fall, chap. 59, paragraph 20.*

And that is exactly as the prophet of God, nearly twenty-five hundred years ago, said it would be.

The statement of these facts has prepared the way for the statement in a few words of the fulfillment of another notable prophecy concerning Egypt. After the scattering of the people by Nebuchadnezzar, the Lord said: "I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation; and they shall be there a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations; for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations." Eze. 29:14, 15. In view of the fact that that nation has been so sold into the hands of strangers, and so spoiled by them, it is easy to see how, from the wisest of nations, she could become the basest of kingdoms. A hundred years ago Volney wrote this:—

"In Egypt there is no middle class, neither nobility, clergy, merchants, nor land-holders. A universal air of misery in all the traveler meets points out to him the rapacity of oppression, and the distrust attendant upon slavery. The profound ignorance of the inhabitants equally prevents them from perceiving the causes of their evils, or applying the necessary remedies. Ignorance, diffused through every class, extends its effects to every species of moral and physical knowledge. Nothing is talked of but intense troubles, the public misery, pecuniary extortions, and bastinadoes."

In 1875 Dr. Robert Patterson wrote this:—

"The wretched peasantry are rejoiced to labor for any who will pay them five cents a day, and eager to hide the treasure in the ground from the rapacious tax-gatherer. I have seen British horses refuse to eat the meal ground from the mixture of wheat, barley, oats, lentils, millet, and a hundred unknown seeds of weeds and collections of filth, which forms the produce of their fields. For poverty, vermin, and disease, Egypt is proverbial." "I have seen the population of several villages, forced to leave their own fields in the spring, to march down to an old, filthy canal, near Cairo, and almost within sight of the gate of the palace, men, and women, and little boys, and girls, like those of our Sabbath-schools, scooping up the stinking mud and water with their hands, into baskets, carrying them on their heads up the steep bank, beaten with long sticks by the task-masters to hasten their steps, while steam dredgers lay unused within sight."—*Fables of Infidelity, chap. 8.*

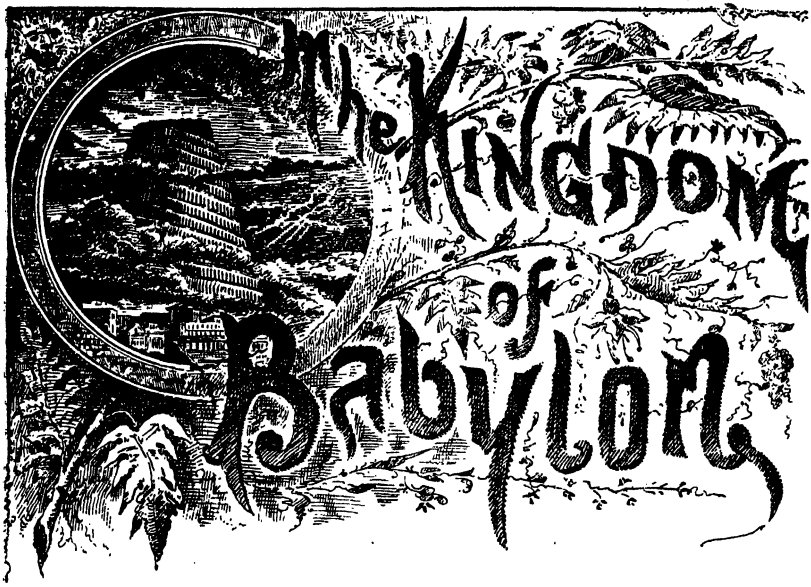
Twelve years later Mrs. Susan E. Wallace wrote of Egypt and her people, as follows:—

"The valley of the Nile produces three crops a year; and sowing, plowing, reaping go on at the same time. Women worked in the fields with the men, each wearing one loose garment. There was no machinery but the *shadof*, like our old-fashioned well-sweep, the most primitive of pumps, and a rush basket. Swinging the water-tight basket, they moved with machine-like precision, these forever oppressed Egyptians, without recollections of a great past or ambition pointing to a better future. Their very souls are enslaved by centuries of grinding tyranny, knowing no change but a change of task-makers. The locomotive gives them no impulses, and they do not lift their heads as the herald of a new civilization, a chariot mightier than Pharaoh's, rolls past. Among the low-bending figures we saw the tattoed faces and painted blue lips, forbidden by the Levitical law.

"In a slow, heart-broken way they moved steadily, swinging the rush basket, in the hard service of the field named in Deuteronomy, drawing up water from the river and emptying it on the fields in the higher levels. Sometimes the passer-by may hear a dull, droning sound from the unpaid toilers, a melancholy chorus chanted by gangs of boys and girls degraded unspeakably, who are set to work together along the Nile banks."

There is no more a prince of the land of Egypt; the idols have utterly ceased; the land is wasted by the hand of strangers; Egypt is the basest of the kingdoms; the prophecy is literally fulfilled; and this word which Ezekiel wrote, as he dwelt among the captives by the river of Chebar, two thousand four hundred and seventy-four years ago, is the word of God.

"Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper."



"Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency." Isa. 13:19.

AT the time when the book of Daniel opens, the Jewish nation was subject to the Babylonians, and many of the Jews were in Babylon. A few years before (about 610 B. C.), the king of Egypt had deposed Jehoahaz, king of Judah, and placed Eliakim, whom he named Jehoiakim, on the throne. 2 Chron. 36:2–4. In the third year of his reign (Dan. 1:1) Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem and besieged it. The city was taken, Jehoiakim was bound with fetters, and some of the vessels of the house of God (2 Chron. 36:7; Dan. 1:2) were carried to Babylon. Some of the people, also, among whom were Daniel and his fellows, were carried to Babylon at this time. Dan. 1:3–7. Jehoiakim, however, was allowed to remain in Jerusalem, where he reigned eight years longer. 2 Chron. 36:5. He was then succeeded by Jehoiachin, his son, who, after a reign of three months, was taken by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon. 2 Chron. 36:9, 10. With him were also taken all the royal family, the wealthy people, and the artisans, so that only the poorest people of the land were left in Judah. 2 Kings 24:8–16. This was about B. C. 599. Nebuchadnezzar then placed Mattaniah on the throne of Judah, and changed his name to Zedekiah. After a few years' reign Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, who again came to Jerusalem, and in the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign (about B. C. 588) he succeeded in capturing the city. Zedekiah was carried to Babylon, and with him

all the people who had before been left, and the walls and palaces of Jerusalem were burned to the ground. 2 Chron. 36 : 11–21. This fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah (chap. 17 : 27), and completed the overthrow of the Jewish nation.

It will be well to notice at this point the fulfillment of a prophecy concerning Zedekiah. The prophet Ezekiel, who was then in Babylon, was directed to bring his stuff out of his house, in the day-time, in the presence of the people, and to dig through the wall and carry his stuff through at evening, covering his face at the same time, so that he should not see the ground. Eze. 12 : 3–6. Then he was directed to say to the people of Israel:—

"I am your sign; like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them; they shall remove and go into captivity. And the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth; they shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby; he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with his eyes. My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare; and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there." Eze. 12 : 11–13.

About 589 B. C., Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem and besieged it. For nearly two years the siege was carried on, until "the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land. And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden (now the Chaldees were against the city round about); and the king went the way toward the plain. And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; and all his army were scattered from him. So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon." 2 Kings 25 : 3–7. Thus was Ezekiel's prophecy literally fulfilled, and Jerusalem was left in ruins.

Among the Jews who were carried to Babylon at the first siege of Jerusalem, was Daniel, who was of the royal line. (See Dan. 1 : 3–6.) He and his fellows were chosen to go through a three years' course of study and training, in order that they might be fitted to fill offices of trust in the Babylonian kingdom. They were chosen because of their superior mental ability (Dan. 1 : 4); and so rapidly did they improve that at the end of the three years, when they went before Nebuchadnezzar to be examined, "in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all

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BABYLON.

'The four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings.' Dan. vii. 2–4.

the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." Dan. 1:20. God had given "knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom" to these faithful servants of his, "and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." Verse 17.

Immediately after Daniel had finished his course, his talents were called into action. In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign as sole ruler of Babylon, but the fourth year after he had begun to reign conjointly with his father, he dreamed a dream which troubled him greatly, and the more so because he could not remember what it was. Excessively annoyed and troubled, he sent for the magicians, astrologers, and sorcerers, and demanded of them that they should tell him the dream. They replied: "O king, live forever; tell thy servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation." But Nebuchadnezzar could not tell the dream, any more than they could tell the interpretation without the dream, and after parleying with them for awhile, he ordered that all the wise men of Babylon should be destroyed. (See Dan. 2:1–13.)

Although Daniel was not among those to whom the king had applied for an interpretation of his dream, the command was to destroy all the wise men of Babylon, and so it included him and his companions. It seems that the first intimation Daniel had of the whole affair was when the officers came to take him to the place of execution. (See Dan. 2:14, 15.) He immediately went to the king and asked for a little time, promising that he would tell the dream and the interpretation.

Daniel did not use the respite granted to him in incantations, as the magicians would have done, but went to his house, and, with his three companions, prayed to the God of Heaven. "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of Heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever; for wisdom and might are his; and he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. He revealeth the deep and secret things; he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee; for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter." Dan. 2:19–23.

In this action of Daniel's we have an example of true faith in God. As soon as the secret was revealed to him in the night vision, he began to praise the Lord. He did not wait to see if the king would recognize

what had been revealed to him, as being his dream, but was positive that the Lord had given him just what he asked for. He evidently acted in accordance with the words of the Saviour: "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24. If this injunction were followed by all those who seek the Lord, how much praise there would be to God for blessings conferred.

It was a trying occasion when Daniel went before the king to make known to him his forgotten dream, and one well calculated to cause a young man to tremble. If he failed, one word from the haughty monarch, who had once been disappointed, and who now believed that all his professedly wise men were knaves, would have cost him his head. But we may be sure that Daniel did not tremble, because he knew that he should not fail. He modestly disclaimed the possession of any natural wisdom more than other men, and said: "The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king; but there is a God in Heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." Dan. 2:27, 28.

Then without any hesitation he proceeded to tell the dream. Said he:—

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Dan. 2:31–35.

These verses contain in outline the history of the world from the days of Nebuchadnezzar until the end of time. Immediately after relating the dream, the prophet addressed the king as follows: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. *Thou art this head of gold.*" Verses 37, 38.

How simple are the words of divine truth! In the most direct

manner, and in the fewest words possible, Daniel rehearsed the greatness of the empire over which Nebuchadnezzar reigned, and declared that it was represented by the golden head of the terrible image. The expression, "*Thou* art this head of gold," does not refer to Nebuchadnezzar as an individual, but as the representative of the most magnificent empire that the world ever saw. It was to Nebuchadnezzar that Babylon owed her wonderful prosperity. Rawlinson says:—

"Nebuchadnezzar is the great monarch of the Babylonian Empire, which, lasting only eighty-eight years—from B. C. 625 to B. C. 538—was for nearly half the time under his sway. Its military glory is due chiefly to him, while the constructive energy, which constitutes its especial characteristic, belongs to it still more markedly through his character and genius. It is scarcely too much to say that, but for Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonians *would have had no place in history*. At any rate, their actual place is owing *almost entirely to this prince*, who to the military talents of an able general added a grandeur of artistic conception and a skill in construction which place him on a par with the greatest builders of antiquity."—*Seven Great Monarchies (Rawlinson), Fourth Monarchy, chap. 8, paragraph 24.*

It was fitting, therefore, that Nebuchadnezzar should stand for the empire.

The extent of the Babylonian Empire is indicated in verse 38: "Wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all." This means universal dominion. A few years later, the prophet Jeremiah bore testimony to the same effect. The kings of Tyre, Edom, Moab, etc., with Zedekiah, king of Israel, were contemplating a revolt from Babylonian rule. To show them the folly of such an attempt, the prophet, by the command of the Lord, sent messengers to them, saying: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Thus shall ye say unto your masters: I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son." Jer. 27 : 4–7.

This language is not figurative nor hyperbolical. It is plain history, and is substantiated by the writings of profane historians. The "Encyclopedia Britannica," art. "Babylonia," after telling how Nabopolassar, ruler of the province of Babylonia, revolted from Assyrian rule, says:—

"The seat of empire was now transferred to the southern kingdom. Nabopolassar was followed in 604 by his son Nebuchadnezzar, whose

long reign of forty-three years made Babylon *the mistress of the world.* The whole East was overrun by the armies of Chaldea, Egypt was invaded, and the city of the Euphrates left without a rival."

The city of Babylon is described at great length by Rollin (Ancient History, vol. 1, book 3, chap. 1), and by Prideaux (Connexion, vol. 1, book 2). Our space, however, will allow us to give only the brief, yet very clear, description given by Herodotus. It is as follows:

"The city stands on a broad plain, and is an exact square, a hundred and twenty furlongs in length each way, so that the entire circuit is four hundred and eighty furlongs. While such is its size, in magnificence there is no other city that approaches to it. It is surrounded, in the first place, by a broad and deep moat, full of water, behind which rises a wall fifty royal cubits in width, and two hundred in height.

"And here I may not omit to tell the use to which the mold dug out of the great moat was turned, nor the manner wherein the wall was wrought. As fast as they dug the moat the soil which they got from the cutting was made into bricks, and when a sufficient number were completed they baked the bricks in kilns. Then they set to building, and began with bricking the borders of the moat; after which they proceeded to construct the wall itself, using throughout for their cement hot bitumen, and interposing a layer of wattled reeds at every thirtieth course of the bricks. On the top, along the edges of the wall, they constructed buildings of a single chamber facing one another, leaving between them room for a four-horse chariot to turn. In the circuit of the wall are a hundred gates, all of brass, with brazen lintels and side-posts. The bitumen used in the work was brought to Babylon from the Is, a small stream which flows into the Euphrates at the point where the city of the same name stands, eight days' journey from Babylon. Lumps of bitumen are found in great abundance in this river.

"The city is divided into two portions by the river which runs through the midst of it. This river is the Euphrates, a broad, deep, swift stream, which rises in Armenia and empties itself into the Erythræan [Arabian] Sea. [The river does not flow directly into the Arabian Sea, but into the Persian Gulf.] The city wall is brought down on both sides to the edge of the stream; thence from the corners of the wall, there is carried along each bank of the river a fence of burnt bricks. The houses are mostly three and four stories high; the streets all run in straight lines, not only those parallel to the river, but also the cross streets which lead down to the water-side. At the river end of these cross streets are low gates in the fence that skirts the stream, which are, like the great gates in the outer wall, of brass, and open on the water.

"The outer wall is the main defense of the city. There is, however, a second inner wall, of less thickness than the first, but very little inferior to it in strength. The center of each division of the town was occupied by a fortress. In the one stood the palace of the kings, surrounded by a wall of great strength and size; in the other was the sacred precinct of Jupiter Belus, a square inclosure two furlongs each

way, with gates of solid brass; which was also remaining in my time." —*Book 1, chap. 178–181.*

The royal cubit was twenty-one inches. The reader will therefore see that the outer wall of the city was eighty-seven feet thick, and three hundred and fifty feet high. The city was divided into two parts by the Euphrates, which ran diagonally through it, the banks of which were protected by walls, and the following means of passage from one part of the city to the other was devised:—

"In each of these walls were twenty-five gates, corresponding to the number of the streets which gave upon the river; and outside each gate was a sloped landing-place, by which you could descend to the water's edge, if you had occasion to cross the river. Boats were kept ready at these landing-places to convey passengers from side to side, while for those who disliked this method of conveyance a bridge was provided of a somewhat peculiar construction. A number of stone piers were erected in the bed of the stream, firmly clamped together with fastenings of iron and lead; wooden draw-bridges connected pier with pier during the day, and on these passengers passed over; but at night they were withdrawn, in order that the bridge might not be used during the dark. Diodorus declares that besides this bridge, to which he assigns a length of five stades (about one thousand yards) and a breadth of thirty feet, the two sides of the river were joined together by a tunnel, which was fifteen feet wide and twelve high to the spring of its arched roof."—*Seven Great Monarchies, Fourth Monarchy, chap. 4, paragraph 6.*

The public buildings of the city were on the same magnificent scale. Of one of them we read:—

"The most remarkable edifice in Babylon was the temple of Bel, now marked by the *Babil*, on the northeast, as Professor Rawlinson has shown. It was a pyramid of eight square stages, the basement stage being over two hundred yards each way. A winding ascent led to the summit and the shrine, in which stood a golden image of Bel forty feet high, two other statues of gold, a golden table forty feet long and fifteen feet broad, and many other colossal objects of the same precious material."—*Encyclopedia Britannica, art. Babylon.*

"The great palace was a building of still larger dimensions than the great temple. According to Diodorus, it was situated within a triple inclosure, the innermost wall being twenty stades, the second forty stades, and the outermost sixty stades (nearly seven miles), in circumference. The outer wall was built entirely of plain baked brick. The middle and inner walls were of the same material, fronted with enameled bricks representing hunting scenes. The figures, according to this author, were larger than the life, and consisted chiefly of a great variety of animal forms."

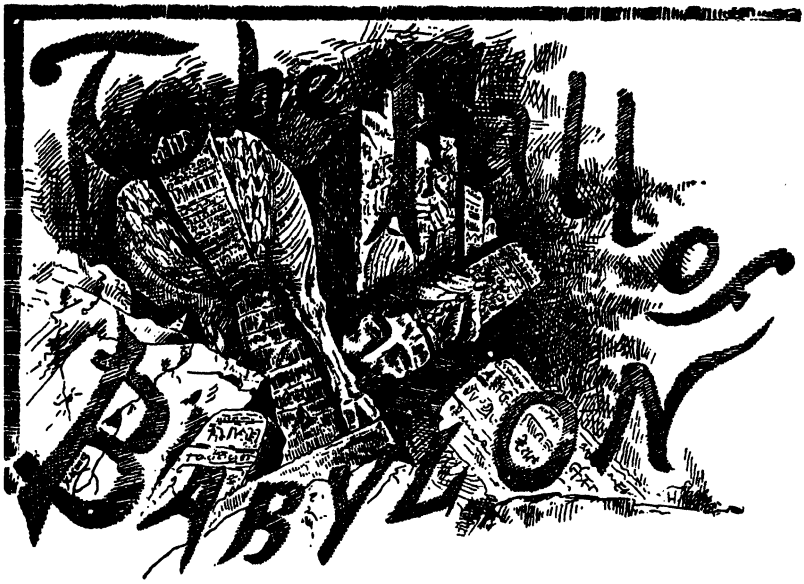
"But the main glory of the palace was its pleasure-ground—the 'Hanging Gardens,' which the Greeks regarded as one of the seven wonders of the world. This extraordinary construction, which owed its erection to the whim of a woman, was a square, each side of which

measured four hundred Greek feet. It was supported upon several tiers of open arches, built one over the other, like the walls of a classic theater, and sustaining at each stage, or story, a solid platform, from which the piers of the next tier of arches rose. The building towered into the air to the height of at least seventy-five feet, and was covered at the top with a great mass of earth, in which there grew not merely flowers and shrubs, but trees also of the largest size. Water was supplied from the Euphrates through pipes, and was raised (it is said) by a screw working on the principle of Archimedes."—*Id., paragraphs 9, 10.*

The city thus briefly outlined, well deserved the title given to it by the prophet,—"The glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency." To the mind of man it would seem that the city so substantially built must stand forever, but God had spoken to the contrary. Without pause, the prophet said: "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." Dan. 2:39. Jeremiah, when he spoke of the greatness of Nebuchadnezzar's empire, foretold its fall, and also told under whose reign it should fall. He said:—

"And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come; and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him." Jer. 27:7.

Thus we find that in the days of Nebuchadnezzar's grandson the kingdom of Babylon should pass away, and other nations and other kings should establish themselves, and serve themselves of this kingdom. And in the direct record of the fall of Babylon, given in Daniel 5, Nebuchadnezzar is repeatedly spoken of as the grandfather of Belshazzar, the king who was reigning in Babylon at the time of its fall. See verses 2, 11, 13 (margin); also "Seven Great Monarchies," Fourth Monarchy, chap. 8, notes 179, 185, and paragraph 51. The exact fulfillment of prophecy in the fall of Babylon will be noted in the next chapter.



"Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom passed away;
He in the balance weighed,
Is light and worthless clay.
The shroud his robe of state,
His canopy, the stone;
The Mede is at his gate,
The Persian on his throne."

ONE hundred and thirteen years before Cyrus was born, Isaiah called him by name, and said, one hundred and seventy-six years before it came to pass, that he should let the people of Israel go from captivity. But Babylon was to fall before Israel could go free; and the prophet also said that Cyrus should take that mighty city. Isa. 45 : 1–5. In the fourth year of Zedekiah, B. C. 597, Seraiah was sent as an embassador to Babylon on business to the king; and by him Jeremiah sent a copy of the prophecies contained in the fiftieth and fifty-first chapters of Jeremiah. Seraiah was to take the prophecy with him, and when he reached Babylon, he was to read it all, and when he had finished the reading of it he was to bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates, and say, "Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her." Jer. 51 : 59–64.

In that prophecy Jeremiah said that the power of the Medes should destroy Babylon. Verses 11, 28. Isaiah said that Elam should be joined with Media: "Go up, O Elam; besiege, O Media." Isa. 21 : 2, 9. Yet only a short time before Babylon fell, Elam was one of the

provinces of the Babylonian Kingdom. Dan. 8:1, 2. Elam was the Susiana of ancient geography, and Cyrus was of Elamite origin, and the recognized chief of the Susianians, and when he began to spread his conquests, the Susianians (Elamites) only waited for the opportune moment to revolt from Babylon and join the standard of Cyrus. The armies of Media and Persia were united under the command of Cyrus, and left Ecbatana, the capital of Media, in the spring of 539 B. C., on the expedition against Babylon.

In that prophecy which Jeremiah had sent to be read in Babylon, it was said to the people of Israel: "My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord. And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumor that shall be heard in the land; a rumor shall both come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumor, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler." Jer. 51:45, 46. Here was given a definite sign by which the people of Israel might know when to escape from Babylon, and from the ruin that was to fall upon her. There were to be two rumors of danger to Babylon, and the rumors were to be a year apart. As stated above, Cyrus started for Babylon in early spring, B. C. 539, but he went only about half way that year. The cause of this is thus stated by Herodotus:—

"Cyrus on his way to Babylon came to the banks of the Gyndes, a stream which, rising in the Matienian Mountains, runs through the country of the Dardanians, and empties itself into the river Tigris. . . . When Cyrus reached this stream, which could only be passed in boats, one of the sacred white horses accompanying his march, full of spirit and high mettle, walked into the water, and tried to cross by himself; but the current seized him, swept him along with it, and drowned him in its depths. Cyrus, enraged at the insolence of the river, threatened so to break its strength that in future even women should cross it easily without wetting their knees. Accordingly *he put off for a time his attack on Babylon*, and, dividing his army into two parts, he marked out by ropes one hundred and eighty trenches on each side of the Gyndes, leading off from it in all directions, and setting his army to dig, some on one side of the river, some on the other, he accomplished his threat by the aid of so great a number of hands, *but not without losing thereby the whole summer season.* Having, however, thus wreaked his vengeance on the Gyndes by dispersing it through three hundred and sixty channels, Cyrus, with the first approach of the ensuing spring, marched forward against Babylon."—*Book 1, chap. 189, 190.*

Here then were the two rumors which Jeremiah said there should be: First, when Cyrus started from Ecbatana, the rumor reached Babylon, and the Babylonians made all ready to meet him in defense of the city. But he stopped and stayed a year, and then started again

for Babylon, which would be the cause of the second rumor. This was what the people of Israel were waiting for; then they knew it was the time to get out of Babylon, for then would surely be violence in the land, ruler against ruler. And thus that prophecy was certainly fulfilled beyond all reasonable dispute.

In the spring of B. C. 538 Cyrus proceeded to Babylon without hindrance. Nabonadius, the king of Babylon, drew up his forces in the plain outside of the city, prepared to give battle. Cyrus attacked him at once and easily defeated him. Nabonadius himself took refuge in Borsippa, while the greater part of his army escaped within the walls of the city, where Belshazzar was in command. When they all got within the mighty walls of Babylon, with all the brazen gates securely fastened with the heavy iron bars, they felt perfectly secure, and laughed defiance at Cyrus and all his forces, and at all his efforts to force his way in. But Cyrus had already made a success of turning the river Gyndes out of its banks, and he determined to do the same thing for the Euphrates. The Euphrates ran directly through the city, under the walls, and Cyrus determined to turn the waters out of the channel, and then, under cover of darkness, follow the bed of the river into the city. This also was in fulfillment of prophecy: "A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up." "And I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry." Jer. 50:38; 51:36. Thus spake the prophet sixty years before, telling what should be, and the following are the words of the historian telling what was:—

"Withdrawing the greater part of his army from the vicinity of the city, and leaving behind him only certain corps of observation, Cyrus marched away up the course of the Euphrates for a certain distance, and there proceeded to make a vigorous use of the spade. His soldiers could now appreciate the value of the experience which they had gained by dispersing the Gyndes, and perceive that the summer and autumn of the preceding year had not been wasted. They dug a channel or channels from the Euphrates, by means of which a great portion of its water would be drawn off, and hoped in this way to render the natural course of the river fordable."—*Seven Great Monarchies* (*Rawlinson*), *Fourth Monarchy, chap. 8, paragraph 52.*

Isaiah was shown in vision that Babylon would fall in a time of feasting: "Prepare the table, watch in the watch-tower, eat, drink;" and that in the midst of it she would be attacked: "Arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield." Chap. 21:5, 9. And thus says the history:—

"When all was prepared, Cyrus determined to wait for the arrival of a certain festival, during which the whole population were wont to engage in drinking and reveling, and then silently in the dead of night to turn the water of the river and make his attack. All fell out as he hoped and wished. The festival was held with even greater

pomp and splendor than usual; for Belshazzar, with the natural insolence of youth, to mark his contempt of the besieging army, abandoned himself wholly to the delights of the season, and himself entertained a thousand lords in his palace."—*Ib.*

Daniel was in Babylon that night, and tells what happened there: "Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father [grandfather, margin] Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein."

Jeremiah said it was "a land of graven images," and prophesied that they would be "mad upon their idols." Chap. 50:38. And Daniel says that in that night's feast which he saw "they drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone." Dan. 5:1–4.

Isaiah, one hundred and seventy-six years before, said that their night of pleasure should be turned into fear. Chap. 21:3, 4. Daniel tells what did it: "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." Chap. 5:5.

Isaiah in vision pictured him thus in his fear: "My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me;" "therefore are my loins filled with pain; pangs have taken hold upon me; . . . I was bowed down at the hearing of it; I was dismayed at the seeing of it." Daniel tells what was the reality: "Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." Chap. 5:6.

Isaiah showed that he would call in the astrologers: "Let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee;" "none shall save thee." Chap. 47:13, 15.

Daniel says the king did so: "The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers; . . . but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonied." Chap. 5:7–9.

This was the scene in the king's banqueting-house, but it was only a sample of what was going on all over the city, for it was a national feast. Says William Hayes Ward, in the *Sunday School Times*:—

"We are told in Daniel that Babylon was captured on the night of a great feast to the idol gods, at which the wives and concubines joined in a wild revelry. But the women were not in the habit of feasting with men—how is this? An account, by Cyrus himself, of his capture of Babylon, was dug up only three or four years ago. In it he declares that Babylon was captured, 'without fighting,' on the fourteenth day of the month Tammuz. Now the month Tammuz was named in honor of the god Tammuz, the Babylonian Adonis, who married their Venus or Ishtar; and the fourteenth of Tammuz was the regular time to celebrate their union, with lascivious orgies. On this day of all others, the women took part in the horrible rites; and it was in this feast of king, princes, wives, and concubines, that Babylon was taken and Belshazzar slain. The Bible is here fully and wonderfully corroborated."—*Vol. 25, No. 42, pp. 659, 660.*

Jeremiah had said sixty years before: "And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men; and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the Lord of Hosts." "In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the Lord." Jer. 51 : 57, 39

The following is the statement of Rawlinson as to what was going on outside of the king's palace, as well as in it:—

"Elsewhere the rest of the population was occupied in feasting and dancing. Drunken riot and mad excitement held possession of the town; the siege was forgotten; ordinary precautions were neglected. Following the example of their king, the Babylonians gave themselves up for the night to orgies in which religious frenzy and drunken excess formed a strange and revolting medley."—*Seven Great Monarchies, Fourth Monarchy, chap. 8, paragraph 52.*

As all this was being so wildly carried on in the city, outside of it the Medes and Persians were waiting for the waters to run low enough to allow them to wade in the bed of the river, even as Jeremiah had said long before, "Set up the watchmen, prepare the liers in wait." Chap. 51 : 12, margin. And thus says the history:—

"Meanwhile, outside the city, in silence and darkness, the Persians watched at the two points where the Euphrates entered and left the walls. Anxiously they noted the gradual sinking of the water in the river bed; still more anxiously they watched to see if those within the walls would observe the suspicious circumstance and sound an alarm through the town. Should such an alarm be given, all their labors would be lost. If, when they entered the river bed, they found the river walls manned and the river gates fast-locked, they would be indeed 'caught in a trap.' Enfiladed on both sides by the enemy whom they could neither see nor reach, they would be overwhelmed and destroyed by his missiles before they could succeed in making their escape. But, as they watched, no sounds of alarm reached them—only

a confused noise of revel and riot, which showed that the unhappy townsmen were quite unconscious of the approach of danger."—*Id.*, *paragraph 53*.

That the Babylonians should be taken, entirely unconscious of their danger, was just what Isaiah had said away back in his day: "Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth; and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off; and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know." Isa. 47 : 11. And Jeremiah had said: "I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware; thou art found, and also caught." Chap. 50 : 24. And that the river gates would not be fast-locked Isaiah had promised one hundred and seventy-four years before: "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and *the gates shall not be shut.*" Chap. 45 : 1.

Jeremiah had also said, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn by himself, saying, Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillars; and they shall lift up a shout against thee." Chap. 51 : 14. And the history says:—

"At last shadowy forms began to emerge from the obscurity of the deep river bed, and on the landing-places opposite the river gates scattered clusters of men grew into solid columns—the undefended gateways were seized—a war-shout was raised—the alarm was taken and spread—and swift runners started off to 'show the king of Babylon that his city was taken at one end.' In the darkness and confusion of the night a terrible massacre ensued. The drunken revelers could make no resistance. The king, paralyzed with fear at the awful handwriting upon the wall, which too late had warned him of his peril, could do nothing even to check the progress of the assailants, who carried all before them everywhere. Bursting into the palace, a band of Persians made their way to the presence of the monarch, and slew him on the scene of his impious revelry. Other bands carried fire and sword through the town."—*Id.*, *paragraph 54*.

Jeremiah had said that fire and sword should be carried through the town: "A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise men. A sword is upon the liars; and they shall dote; a sword is upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed. A sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that are in the midst of her; and they shall become as women." "Thus saith the Lord of hosts: The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people

shall labor in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary." Jer. 50:35–37; 51:58.

Thus fell Babylon, and all the graven images of her gods were broken unto the ground.

But this was not all. The prophets also spoke of the utter ruin of Babylon as well as of her fall. Isaiah wrote thus: "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the island shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." Isa. 13:19–22.

The city continued to be a place of considerable importance throughout the Persian dominion, although it was injured a good deal by some sieges brought on by the revolt of its inhabitants, and it also suffered damage from the effect of the waters of the river that were turned aside by Cyrus, and never fully turned back. Alexander the Great made Babylon an important point in his expedition. There he held the "states-general of the world," and decided to re-establish it in its old importance, and make it the grand capital of his empire. He set ten thousand men at work to repair the Euphrates, and planned other restorations, but his death put a stop to it all. Soon afterward Seleucus built Seleucia, forty-five miles up the river, which in a comparatively short time became a city of six hundred thousand inhabitants, governed by a senate of three hundred nobles. On the building of Seleucia, Babylon was wholly deserted, and the great temples, the pleasant palaces, and the grand houses were all left desolate, only to be filled with doleful creatures, and to echo with the dismal cries of owls.

The prophet said not only that wild beasts of the deserts should lie there, but that wild beasts of *the islands* should cry in the desolate houses; yet Babylon was an inland city, more than a hundred miles from the nearest point of the Persian Gulf, and many hundreds from the nearest islands. But the Macedonian kings of the East made Babylon a hunting-park, and kept the wild animals in the desolate houses, letting them out for a chase as occasion required. And for this purpose wild beasts from the far-off islands were brought away inland there and put in the desolate houses and pleasant palaces that had witnessed the

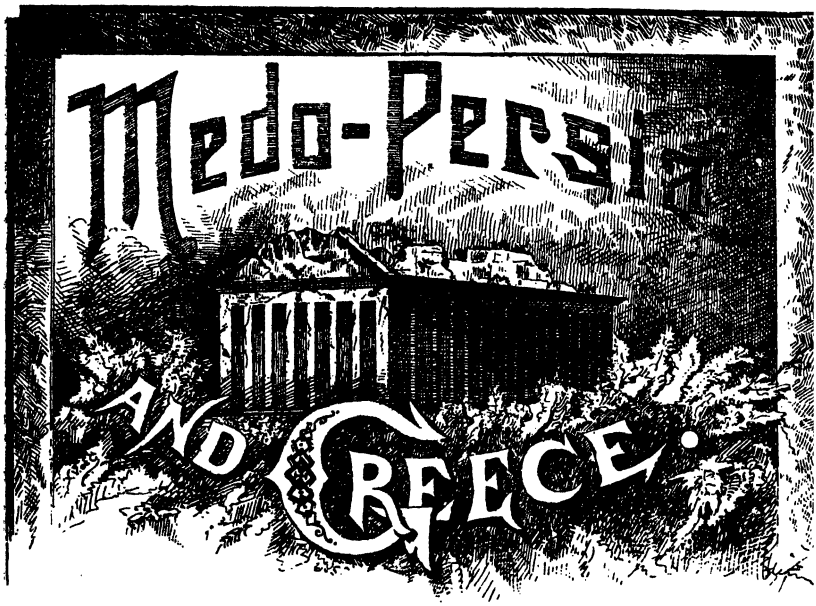
pomp and the glory of the greatest kings of the earth. The prophecy was literally fulfilled.

Again, Isaiah said: "I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts." Chap. 14:23. Mr. Layard, who visited it about 1845, says:—

"Besides the great mound, other shapeless heaps of rubbish cover for many an acre the face of the land. The lofty banks of ancient canals fret the country like natural ridges of hills. Some have been long choked with sand; others still carry the waters of the river to distant villages and palm groves. On all sides, fragments of glass, marble, pottery, and inscribed brick, are mingled with that peculiar nitrous and blanched soil, which, bred from the remains of ancient habitations, checks or destroys vegetation, and renders the site of Babylon a naked and a hideous waste. Owls (which are of a large gray kind, and often found in flocks of nearly a hundred) start from the scanty thickets, and the foul jackal skulks through the furrows."—*Nineveh and Babylon, p. 484.*

The prophecy says, "Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there." The natives regard the whole place as actually haunted, and will not pitch their tents there, nor will the shepherds make their fold there. And so is accomplished in perfect faithfulness the word of the Lord concerning Babylon, that "it shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation." And Babylon *has* "become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and a hissing, without an inhabitant." Jer. 51:37.

And "this is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" Isa. 14:26, 27.



"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever; for wisdom and might are his; and he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings. . . . He revealeth the deep and secret things." Dan. 2:20–22.

"AND after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth." Dan. 2:39.

These were the words which followed the brief statement of the extent and the fall of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom. We have already learned that this "inferior" kingdom which was to succeed Babylon in the dominion of the world was the kingdom of the Medes and Persians (Dan. 5:28), and that Cyrus the Persian did actually conquer Babylon, placing upon the throne his uncle, Darius the Median. Dan. 5:30, 31. The conquest of Babylon by Cyrus was effected in B. C. 538, and two years afterward, when Cyrus himself took the throne, he said:—

"Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of Heaven hath given me *all the kingdoms of the earth;* and hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah." Ezra 1:2.

This shows that all of the dominion over which Nebuchadnezzar had ruled, passed into the hands of Cyrus, king of Persia (compare Jer. 27:4–7; Ezra 1:2), and that the Persian Empire was universal. It was not inferior to Babylon in extent, but only in wealth and magnificence. Under this monarchy the prophecies which foretold the restoration of the Jews to their own land were fulfilled. Most of the Persian

kings, although noted for their cruelty, treated the Jews with great favor. An account of the dealings of the Persian kings with the Jews, is found in the books of Esther, Nehemiah, and Ezra. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah uttered their prophecies after the return from the captivity, but before the complete restoration. Not a single prophecy foretelling the restoration of the Jews to Palestine and old Jerusalem, has any application this side of the decree issued by Artaxerxes, king of Persia, recorded in Ezra 7. Those who are looking to the future for a time when all the Jews on earth will flock to Jerusalem and the land of Palestine, will look in vain.

But the prophet did not dwell for a moment upon the empire of Persia. He mentioned its rise, only to foretell its fall. "And another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth." History tells us very clearly what universal empire followed that of Medo-Persia, but we will not forestall the prophecy; the Bible shall be its own interpreter.

In the eighth chapter of Daniel, verses 3–8, is a record of part of a vision which Daniel saw. Let the reader examine the passage carefully at his leisure; we shall here give only a summary of what the prophet saw. He saw a ram standing by a river. The ram was so very powerful and fierce that no beast could stand before him, "but he did according to his will, and became great." While the prophet was still looking, he saw a rough goat with a notable horn between his eyes, come from the west, running with incredible swiftness, so that its feet seemed not to touch the ground. This goat came with fury to the ram, and smote him, and cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him; and there was no power that could save the ram from the wrath of the goat.

In verses 20 and 21 this is explained as follows: "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia; and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king." Then since the goat overpowered the ram, the prophecy teaches that Grecia succeeded Medo-Persia as mistress of the world.

This is attested by all history. There is no other fact of history so well known as that Alexander the Great conquered the world. "But," says one, "Alexander was king of Macedon, and it was Greece, according to the prophecy, that overthrew Medo-Persia." Very true; but it was as king of Greece, and not as king of Macedon, that Alexander started out on his career of conquest. If he had not had united Greece at his back, even he could not have become master of the world. Grote says:—

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MEDO-PERSIA.

"And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it." Dan. vii. 5.

"After displaying his force in various portions of Peloponnesus, Alexander returned to Corinth, where he convened deputies from the Grecian cities generally. . . . Alexander asked from the assembled deputies the same appointment which the victorious Philip had required and obtained two years before—the hegemony or headship of the Greeks collectively for the purpose of prosecuting war against Persia. To the request of a prince at the head of an irresistible army, one answer only was admissible. He was nominated imperator with full powers, by land and sea. Overawed by the presence and sentiment of Macedonian force, all acquiesced in this vote except the Lacedæmonians.

"The convention sanctioned by Alexander was probably the same as that settled by and with his father Philip. *Its grand and significant feature was, that it recognized Hellas* [*Greece*] *as a confederacy* under the Macedonian prince as imperator, or executive head and arm. *It crowned him* with a legal sanction as keeper of the peace with Greece, and *conqueror* abroad *in the name of Greece.*"—*History of Greece, chap. 91.*

Philip, Alexander's father, had succeeded in securing the headship of the Greeks, but his death followed two years after, so that he never made any use of it. Alexander, therefore, is properly styled in the Scriptures the first king of Greece.

We have no space to devote to an account of Alexander's victories at the Granicus, and at Issus, by which he gained Egypt and all of Asia west of the Euphrates, and brought Darius, the last king of Persia, to sue for peace. Alexander did not wish for a peace which would leave a rival to him; and the last battle, which resulted in the complete overthrow of the Persian kingdom, was fought near Arbela. Of the results of this battle, Grote says:—

"The prodigious army of Darius was all either killed, taken, or dispersed at the battle of Arbela. No attempt to form a subsequent army ever succeeded; we read of nothing stronger than divisions or detachments. The miscellaneous contingents of this once mighty empire, such at least among them as survived, dispersed to their respective homes and could never be again mustered in mass. The defeat of Arbela was in fact the death-blow of the Persian Empire. It converted Alexander into the great king, and Darius into nothing better than a fugitive pretender."—*History of Greece, chap. 93, paragraphs 87, 88.*

The Grecian Empire, therefore, with Alexander as its first king, was the power that succeeded Medo-Persia. The battle of Arbela, which made Grecia supreme, was fought in the year 331 B. C. The Medo-Persian Empire had therefore enjoyed universal sway for two hundred and seven years, from 538 to 331 B. C.

"Which shall bear rule over all the earth." These were the words by which Daniel described the Grecian Empire, which corresponded to the brazen portion of the image. Does history bear out the prediction of the prophet? and did the empire of Greece actually bear

rule over "all the earth"? A few quotations will suffice to answer this question.

Rollin says of Alexander's eager desire to reach Babylon, a few years after the battle of Arbela:—

"He knew that there were arrived in that city, *ambassadors from all parts of the world*, who waited for his coming; *the whole earth echoing so with the terror of his name*, that the several nations came, with inexpressible ardor, *to pay homage to Alexander, as to him who was to be their sovereign.* . . . So that he set forward with all possible diligence toward that great city, *there to hold the states-general*, as it were, *of the world.*"—*History of Alexander, sec. 18.*

The "Encyclopedia Britannica" says of his march to the city of Babylon:—

"As he advanced on his road he was met by ambassadors not only from Illyrians and Thracians, from Sicily and Sardinia, from Libya and Carthage, but from Lucanians and Etruscans, and, as some said, *from Rome* itself. *The lord of all the earth could scarcely look for wider acknowledgment or more devout submission.*"

Grote says:—

"So widely had the terror of his name and achievements been spread, that several of these envoys came from the most distant regions. There were some from the various tribes of Libya [west of Egypt]—from Carthage [west of Libya]—from Sicily and Sardinia—from the Illyrians and Thracians—from the Lucanians, Bruttians, and Tuscans, in Italy—nay even (some affirmed) *from the Romans*, as yet a people of moderate power. But there were other names yet more surprising—Ethiopians from the extreme South, beyond Egypt—Scythians from the North, beyond the Danube—Iberians [from Spain] and Gauls [from France], from the far West, beyond the Mediterranean Sea. . . . *The proofs which Alexander received, even from distant tribes* with names and costumes unknown to him, *of fear for his enmity and anxiety for his favor*, were such as had never been shown to any historical person, and such as entirely to explain his superhuman arrogance."—*Chap. 94, paragraph 79.*

What further proof is needed, to show that the dream and interpretation thereof, which accurately predicted these wondrous changes in the empire of the world scores and hundreds of years before they took place, were given by the "God in Heaven, that revealeth secrets," and who will do nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets? See Amos 3:7.

"Rome,
That sat on her seven hills, and from her throne
Of beauty ruled the world."

"In that elder day, to be a *Roman*,
Was greater than a *king*."

"AND the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise." Dan. 2:40.

We have learned the names of the first three empires symbolized by the gold, the silver, and the brass of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The head of gold represented Babylon, whose universal dominion lasted from 606 to 538 B. C. The breast and arms of silver represented the Medo-Persian Empire, which from 538 to 331 B. C. ruled the territory that had formed the Babylonian Empire. And the belly and thighs of brass symbolized the kingdom of Greece, which, in the year 331 B. C., began to "bear rule over all the earth." Each one of these kingdoms was universal; therefore the fourth kingdom, which was represented by iron, must also be universal. We must expect to see it as much more powerful than either of the preceding as iron is stronger than gold, silver, or brass. This is indicated by the words of the prophet, "And as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise."

The name of this fourth kingdom is not given, but we have the data by which it may easily be ascertained. The four universal kingdoms, with the kingdoms into which the fourth was to be divided, cover the history of the world until the end of time, when the God of

Heaven shall set up a kingdom which "shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Now since there are but four universal monarchies from the days of Nebuchadnezzar till the end of time, and we have the names of three of them, it is evident that if anywhere in history we find any mention of a universal kingdom other than one of those already found, it will be the one sought, —the one represented by the iron legs of the image. Here, as in the case of each of the other kingdoms, the Bible furnishes us with what we want. It says:—

"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that *all the world* should be taxed." Luke 2:1.

One needs only to hear the words "Cæsar" and "Augustus," to have Rome brought to his mind,—

> "Rome,
> That sat on her seven hills, and from her throne
> Of beauty ruled the world."

Rome, then, is the fourth universal monarchy,—the one represented by the legs of iron.

After the death of Alexander, his empire was divided into four parts, namely, Macedon, Thrace, Syria, and Egypt. The history of these divisions of the Grecian Empire, for the next two hundred years, is one of continual warfare for the supremacy. All this time Rome was developing, and enlarging her borders. The year 171 B. C. found Rome engaged in war with Perseus, king of the Macedonian division of the Grecian Empire. The war continued three years, and its result is thus described by Prof. Arthur Gilman:—

"In 168 the Romans met the army of Perseus at Pydna, in Macedonia, north of Mount Olympus, on the 22d June, and utterly defeated it. Perseus was afterward taken prisoner and died at Alba. *From the battle of Pydna* the great historian Polybius, who was a native of Megalopolis, *dates the complete establishment of the universal empire of Rome*, since after that no civilized State ever confronted her on an equal footing, and all the struggles in which she engaged were rebellions or wars with 'barbarians' outside of the influence of Greek or Roman civilization, and since all the world recognized the Senate as the tribunal of last resort in differences between nations."—*Story of Rome (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York), pp. 163, 164.*

In "Prideaux's Connexion" (part 2, book 3) we find testimony to the same effect. In the record of the year 168 B. C., Prideaux tells of the embassy which the Roman Senate sent to command Antiochus to desist from his contemplated war upon Egypt. Popillius, the chief of the embassy, met Antiochus near Alexandria, and delivered to him the decree of Rome. "Antiochus having read the decree, told Popillius he would consult with his friends about it, and speedily give him the

answer they should advise; but Popillius, insisting on an immediate answer, forthwith drew a circle round him [Antiochus] in the sand with the staff which he had in his hand, and required him to give his answer before he stirred out of that circle; at which strange and peremptory way of proceeding Antiochus being startled, after a little hesitation, yielded to it, and told the ambassador, that he would obey the command of the Senate."

Picture the scene—Antiochus fully armed, at the head of a vast army, surrounded by his generals, yet obeying the decree that was brought him by an unarmed citizen of Rome! How can such weakness be accounted for? Prideaux answers:—

"That which made him [Popillius] so bold as to act with him after this peremptory manner, and the other so tame as to yield thus patiently to it, was the news which they had a little before received of the great victory of the Romans, which they had gotten over Perseus, king of Macedonia. For Paulus Æmilius having now vanquished that king, and thereby added Macedonia to the Roman Empire, the name of the Romans after this carried that weight with it, as created a terror in all the neighboring nations; so that none of them after this cared to dispute their commands, but were glad on any terms to maintain peace, and cultivate a friendship with them."

These quotations also serve to corroborate the conclusion already arrived at, that Rome was the fourth universal empire. A very few quotations, out of the many at hand, will suffice to show the extent and power of Rome. Says Gibbon:—

"A modern tyrant, who should find no resistance either in his own breast, or in his people, would soon experience a gentle restraint from the example of his equals, the dread of present censure, the advice of his allies, and the apprehension of his enemies. The object of his displeasure, escaping from the narrow limits of his dominions, would easily obtain, in a happier climate, a secure refuge, a new fortune adequate to his merit, the freedom of complaint, and perhaps the means of revenge. But the empire of the Romans *filled the world*, and when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. The slave of imperial despotism, whether he was condemned to drag his gilded chain in Rome and the Senate, or to wear out a life of exile on the barren rock of Seriphus, or the frozen banks of the Danube, expected his fate in silent despair. *To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly.* On every side he was encompassed with a vast extent of sea and land, which he could never hope to traverse without being discovered, seized, and restored to his irritated master. Beyond the frontiers, his anxious view could discover nothing, except the ocean, inhospitable deserts, hostile tribes of barbarians, of fierce manners and unknown language, or dependent kings, who would gladly purchase the emperor's protection by the sacrifice of an obnoxious fugitive. '*Wherever you are*,' said Cicero to the exiled Marcellus, '*remember that you are equally within*

the power of the conqueror.'"—Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, chap. 3, paragraph 37.

De Quincey says:—

"That imperatorial dignity . . . was undoubtedly the sublimest incarnation of power, and a monument the mightiest of greatness built by human hands, which upon this planet has been suffered to appear."—*Essay on the Cæsars, chap. 6, last paragraph.*

Again, the historian Gibbon, in recording the universal conquest of Rome, makes unmistakable reference to Dan. 2:40, in the following words:—

"The ambitious design of conquest, which might have been defeated by the seasonable conspiracy of mankind, was attempted and achieved; and the perpetual violation of justice was maintained by the political virtues of prudence and courage. The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the *iron* monarchy of Rome."—*Decline and Fall, first paragraph under General Observations at the close of chap. 38.*

But so long as nations are composed of mortal men, they must be subject to change; and so we find that the empire of Rome did not always retain its proud position as a universal monarchy. But we must not anticipate the prophecy:—

"And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." Dan. 2:41–43.

In these words a division is foretold. This is not the place to give the details of that division; but that it has been made is evident from the fact that there is no universal empire of Rome to-day. The territory that was once governed by a single man, is now in the hands of several rulers. Suffice it to say that the breaking up of Rome into fragments was accomplished by the vast hordes of barbarians that poured in from the North; that the first division was made in 351 A. D., after Rome had stood as an undivided universal empire for over five hundred years; and that the last division was made in 476 A. D.

The prophecy indicates that these divisions would seek to reunite, but that such reunion will be as impossible as for clay to become united

RUINS OF THE FORUM AT ROME.

to iron. "They shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

The closing act in the great drama of the nations is thus described: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Dan. 2:44.

Here is brought to view the setting up of the fifth universal empire —the kingdom of the God of Heaven—represented by the stone which dashed the image in pieces. That kingdom will not be a temporal kingdom, because it "shall not be left to other people;" the people who are citizens of it when it is set up, will be citizens of it to all eternity, for "it shall stand forever."

That kingdom will be a real, literal kingdom, as much so as was Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, or Rome. It will have territory and subjects. Moreover, it will occupy the very same territory that those kingdoms occupied, for it is to break them in pieces, before it can be established. Yes, it will occupy more territory than those kingdoms did, for when they were at the height of their power, much of the world was undiscovered; but God has said to Christ: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and *the uttermost parts of the earth* for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Ps. 2:8, 9.

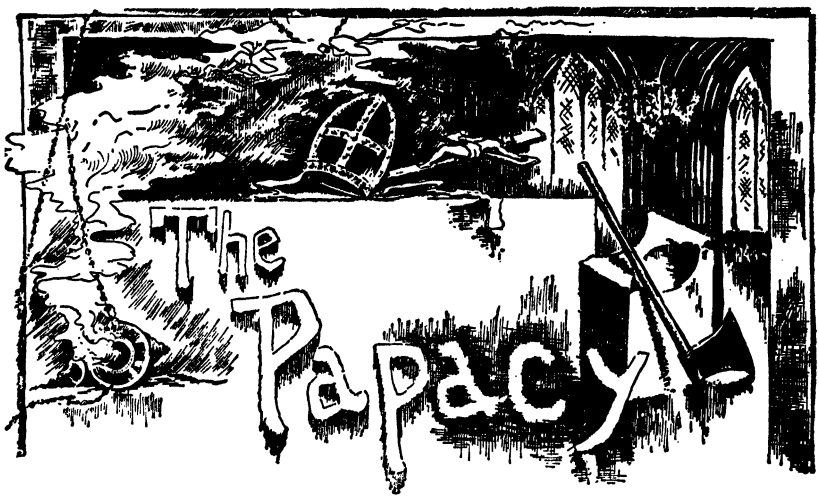
Thus we see that the object of the prophecy is to bring to our attention the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the throne of his glory, to give reward to his saints, and to destroy them that corrupt the earth. We know not the time of that last great overturning, but we know that, in the nature of things, it cannot be long. From the supremacy of Babylon to that of Medo-Persia was less than a hundred years; from Medo-Persia to Greece was two hundred and seven years; from Greece to Rome was one hundred and sixty-three years; and from the accession of Rome to the dominion of the world till the present time has been over two thousand years.

We say that from the nature of things time cannot last much longer. Degeneration is the word that describes the nations from the creation till now. In Nebuchadnezzar's day gold was a fit symbol of earthly power. A little later, and silver, an inferior metal, was used as a symbol. In a short time brass represented the value of earthly monarchies. Then came the iron, then iron mixed (but not united) with clay, until now the clay seems to predominate. Moral degeneration is likewise going on. Evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse; but soon shall come the time when the Lord

shall "send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire." Matt. 13:41, 42. Christ, the stone cut out without hands, shall break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold,—the nations "that know not God, and that obey not the gospel,"—and they shall become like the chaff of the summer threshing floor. The fate of the chaff is to be burned up with "unquenchable fire" (Matt. 3:12); and so it is said of the ungodly nations, that "as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust." Isa. 5:24.

This does not mean gradual extinction, nor conversion. There is no scriptural warrant for the idea that the stone shall "roll and roll, ever increasing in size until it shall have gathered to it all nations, and so shall fill the whole earth." There is no rolling about it. The stone *smites* the image, and instantly dashes it in pieces. This smiting is not conversion for when Christ smites the earth with the rod of his mouth it is the slaying of the wicked by the breath of his lips. (See Isa. 11:4.) While the wicked are saying, "Peace and safety," and are deluding themselves that all things shall continue as they were from the beginning of the creation, then sudden destruction shall come upon them, and they shall not escape. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

Thus the Lord makes known to us "what shall be in the latter days;" it will surely come to pass, for "the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Dan. 2:45.



"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine Mountains cold;
. . . In thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep. . . .
Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, ...
That from these may grow
A hundred-fold, who, having learned thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe."

—*Milton.*

"IN the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed; then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters." Dan. 7: 1.

Just what year the first year of Belshazzar was, we are unable to determine. It used to be stated, with confidence, that it was the year 555 B. C.; but then it was supposed that Belshazzar and Nabonadius were one and the same person. The name Nabonadius was found in the accounts of the overthrow of Babylon; and, knowing that he began to reign in 555 B. C., chronologers placed 555 in the margin of the Bible, as the first year of Belshazzar. But more recent explorations have revealed the fact that Belshazzar was the son of Nabonadius, and was simply associate king with his father. (See Rawlinson's Seven Great Monarchies, Fourth Monarchy, chap. 8, paragraphs 38–50.) When Cyrus came against Babylon, Nabonadius came out to meet him, but, being defeated, he shut himself up in Borsippa, a few miles below Babylon, leaving Belshazzar in charge of the city of Babylon.

This explains why Belshazzar, on the night of his riotous feast, promised to make Daniel the *third* ruler in the kingdom (Dan. 5: 16), and not the second, if he would interpret the writing on the wall. He promised Daniel the highest place that there was to bestow. Nabo-

nadius was first, Belshazzar himself was second, and Daniel was made third. This is one of the strongest proofs of the accuracy of the Bible as an historical record. The more the ancient records are unearthed, the more exact and authentic is the Bible shown to be.

"Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another." Dan. 7: 2, 3.

The Scriptures never put a man under the necessity of guessing at anything that God wishes him to understand; he wishes us to understand the book of Daniel (Matt. 24: 15), and therefore we shall look to the Bible for the interpretation of this vision. In this seventh chapter we have the explanation. Verse 17 says:—

"These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth."

And then, that nothing may be lacking by which to identify them, the angel who is giving the explanation continues:—

"But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." Verse 18.

From this verse we learn that these four kingdoms are to be the only universal empires before the setting up of the kingdom of God, of which the saints are heirs, and in which they are to dwell forever. We found that this was the case with the four kingdoms of Daniel 2. Therefore we know that the four kings of Daniel 7 must be identical with the four kings of Daniel 2. For it is an utter impossibility that two series of universal kingdoms should exist in the earth at the same time.

There are two other symbols, namely, the winds and the sea, but they are easily explained. The four beasts (kingdoms) came up as the result of the strife of the four winds of heaven upon the great sea. Winds blowing on the sea, produce commotion. But the commotion by which nations rise and fall is war; therefore we must conclude that the four winds blowing on the great sea, represent strife among the people of the earth. We shall see that this is correct.

It must be accepted as a fact that when a symbol is once used in prophecy, with a certain meaning, it must have the same meaning in whatever other prophecy it is found. If this were not so, there would be no harmony in the Bible. By following this principle, all is harmonious. In the seventeenth of Revelation, John says that he saw a woman sitting on many waters (verse 1); and the angel told him (verse 15) that these waters were "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." Then the great sea of Daniel 7 must represent the people of

the earth. See also Isa. 8:7, where the people of Assyria are called "the waters of the river." If the sea means people, then of course the stirring up of the sea by winds denotes the stirring up of the people,—strife. In harmony with this, we find in Jer. 25:32, 33 that, as the result of a great whirlwind that shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth, the slain shall be from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth. In Rev. 7:1–3 the winds—the fierce passions of men—are represented as being held so that the earth may not be hurt.

The prophecy, then, simply brings to view the four universal empires,—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome,—each arising as the result of the ungoverned passions of the people. They were presented in this manner, in order to bring out additional features. The first, Babylon, with its power and glory, was represented by a lion, with eagle's wings. Dan. 7:4. In one place it is described as follows: "For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation. . . Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves; and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat." Hab. 1:6–8.

Daniel continues concerning this first beast:—

"I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it." Dan. 7:4. The marginal rendering "wherewith," in place of the first "and," makes the passage more clear thus: "I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, wherewith it was lifted up from the earth, and [it was] made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it."

The wings upon the back of the lion symbolize the swiftness with which Babylon extended her conquests. (See Hab. 1:6–8, quoted above.) By its wings it was lifted up from the earth, and made to rise above any obstacle that lay in its path, and thus its progress was unhindered. But the glory of the Babylonian kingdom ended with Nebuchadnezzar. The kingdom was as magnificent as ever, but the power to uphold the magnificence was gone. No longer did it surmount all obstacles as with eagle's wings; it then stood still, and extended its conquests no further. Instead of being lion-hearted, Belshazzar was so timid that "the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another" (Dan. 5:6), when in the midst of his blasphemous revel the handwriting appeared on the wall. "Conscience doth make cowards" of all wicked men, when they see the handwriting of God, whether on the wall or in his book.

"And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it; and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh." Dan. 7:5.

For the expression, "And it raised up itself on one side," the marginal reading would substitute, "it raised up one dominion." This would indicate, what was actually the case, that one branch of the Medo-Persian Empire had the pre-eminence. At the first, the Median kingdom was *the* kingdom, and Persia was only a province. When the Babylonian expedition was begun, it was by Darius, king of Media; his nephew Cyrus, prince of Persia, was simply an ally. When Babylon was conquered, Darius took the throne; but after the death of Darius, the Median portion of the kingdom became secondary. Some historians say that Persia revolted from Media, and gained its pre-eminence by conquest. But however it was, there is no question but that Persia was the leading power in the Medo-Persian dominion. So greatly did it tower above the Median portion, that the empire is often spoken of simply as the Persian Empire.

"And they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh." Dan. 7:5. By this we can see the propriety of having this second line of symbols to represent the four kingdoms. Their peculiar characteristics could not be indicated by the parts of the image, except that one could be shown to be stronger or more magnificent than another. But in this line additional features are indicated. Thus the Medo-Persian Empire is shown to have been characterized by lust for conquest, and disregard for human life. Every reader of history knows that the cruel, despotic disposition of most of the Persian kings, and the vast armies that they sacrificed, fully sustain the character which the prophecy gives to that empire. Prideaux pronounces the Persian kings, after Cyrus, "the worst race of men that ever governed an empire."—*Connexion, under the year 559 B. C., Neriglissar 1.*

"After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it." Dan. 7:6.

The leopard is a very swift-footed beast, and the addition of four wings would give it speed almost beyond comprehension. Nothing could more fitly represent the Grecian Empire under Alexander, whose very name is a synonym for celerity of movement. Says Rollin (book 15, sec. 2, last paragraph), "Alexander, in less than eight years, marched his army upwards of seventeen hundred leagues, without including his return to Babylon." And he conquered enemies as he went.

The four heads of this beast can indicate nothing but the four parts

GRECIA.

"After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.' Dan. vii. 6.

into which the Grecian Empire was divided after the death of Alexander. Bear in mind that the Grecian Empire was not divided into four other empires, but that there were four heads to the one empire, just as there were four heads to the leopard. Rollin gives the history of all the kings of the four divisions, under the head of "Alexander's Successors."

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots; and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." Dan. 7 : 7, 8.

Since the four beasts represented the four universal empires of earth (Dan. 7 : 17, 18), it follows that the fourth beast represents the fourth kingdom, or Rome, of whose iron monarchy we have already read.

But Daniel was not completely satisfied with the first answer given by the angel. From his connection with Nebuchadnezzar's dream he must have known the main features of these four kingdoms; but there were some particulars upon which he desired more light. "Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows." Dan. 7 : 19, 20.

The answer to this request was given as follows:—

"Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, . . . and the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise; and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings." Dan. 7 : 23, 24.

The fourth beast was the fourth kingdom,—Rome,—and the ten horns, it is plainly stated, "are ten kings that shall arise," that is, ten parts into which the Roman Empire should be divided. This division is mentioned in Dan. 2 : 41. It was effected by the incursions of the barbarous tribes which dismembered the Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries, the history of which is so graphically described by Gibbon.

After the division of the Roman Empire was completed, which

was in A. D. 476, another power was to arise, and in its rise was to pluck up three of the first kingdoms by the roots. There is so general an agreement in regard to this "little horn" which had "eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things" (Dan. 7:8), that we risk nothing in saying at once that it represents the papacy. Positive proof of the fact will appear as we proceed. The characteristics given in Dan. 7:8, 20, 21, 25, are met in the papacy, and in no other power. It uprooted three kingdoms to make room for itself; and as if to show the fulfillment of the prophecy, the pope's tiara is a triple crown. Such a crown is worn by no other ruler. The three kingdoms that were plucked up will be named a little further on.

"And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws." Dan. 7 : 25.

If we find that these three specifications apply to the papacy, then it will be useless to look further for an application for the little horn. We will consider them in detail.

1. "He shall speak great words against the Most High." It is a notorious fact that the pope is styled the "Vicar of the Son of God," indicating that he fills the office of Christ. Paul, speaking of the papacy, which he calls the "man of sin" (2 Thess. 2 : 3, 4), says that he "exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped." This is a parallel to Dan 7 : 25. It is fulfilled in the pope's claim to have power to grant indulgences, a thing which God himself has never promised to do. Further, it is fulfilled in the papal dogma of infallibility. This dogma was ratified by the council of 1870, and the following is a portion of the decree:—

"And since by the divine right of apostolic primacy the Roman pontiff is placed over the universal church, we further teach and declare that he is the *supreme judge of the faithful*, and that in all causes, the decision of which belongs to the church, recourse may be had to his tribunal, and that none may re-open the judgment of the apostolic see, than whose authority *there is no greater*, nor can any lawfully review its judgment."—*The Vatican Decrees, by Dr. Philip Schaff.*

Although this dogma was ratified in 1870, it has been held for centuries, as is shown by the following monstrous assertion in one of the Roman decretals:—

"If the pope should become neglectful of his own salvation, and of that of other men, and so lost to all good that he draw down with himself innumerable people by heaps into hell, and plunge them with himself into eternal torments, yet no mortal man may presume to reprehend him, forasmuch as he is judge of all, and to be judged of no one."—*Quoted by Wylie, History of Protestantism, book 5, chap. 10.*

Monsignor Capel, who was private chaplain to Pope Pius IX., in a pamphlet entitled, "The Pope; the Vicar of Christ; the Head of the Church," gives a list of titles and appellations that have been given the pope in various church documents, and from this list we select the following:—

"Most Divine Head of all Heads."
"Holy Father of Fathers, Pontiff Supreme over all Prelates."
"The Chief Pastor; Pastor of Pastors."
"Christ by Unction."
"Melchizedek in Order."
"High Priest, Supreme Bishop."
"Key-Bearer of the Kingdom of Heaven."
"Supreme Chief; Most powerful Word."
"Vicar of Christ."
"Sovereign Bishop of Bishops."
"Ruler of the House of the Lord."
"Apostolic Lord and Father of Fathers."
"Chief Pastor and Teacher and Physician of Souls."
"Rock, against which the proud Gates of Hell prevail not."
"Infallible Pope."
"Head of all the Holy Priests of God."
"Chief of the Universal Church."
"Bishop of Bishops, that is, Sovereign Pontiff."

These titles, and many others equally blasphemous, including "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah," the pope receives as his own by right. In our own enlightened age, this title has been given to Pope Leo XIII., by his servile flatterers, in whose eyes "His Holiness" is a divine being. No other power on earth has ever so opposed and exalted itself against all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that the pope sitteth in the temple of God, "setting himself forth as God." 2 Thess. 2:4, revised version.

2. "And shall wear out the saints of the Most High." When we come to this particular, the evidence is overwhelming. Both time and language would fail to do justice to the matter. Prominent among papal atrocities is the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day. On the 24th of August, 1572, was begun in Paris one of the most horrible, cold-blooded massacres that history records,—that of the Huguenots. The king himself, Charles IX., took part in it, shooting down many of those who were attempting to escape the fury of his soldiers. The number slain throughout France on this occasion is placed by the best authorities at seventy thousand. To show Rome's connection with the massacre, we quote the following from Wylie:—

"At Rome, when the news arrived, the joy was boundless. The messenger who carried the dispatch was rewarded like one who brings tidings of some great victory, and the triumph that followed was such as old Pagan Rome might have been proud to celebrate. . . . Through the streets of the Eternal City swept, in the full blaze of pontifical pomp, Gregory and his attendant train of cardinals, bishops, and monks, to the Church of St. Mark, there to offer up prayers and thanksgivings to the God of Heaven for his great blessing to the see of Rome and the Roman Catholic Church. . . . On the following day the pontiff went in procession to the Church of Minerva, where, after mass, a jubilee was published to all Christendom, 'that they might thank God for the slaughter of the enemies of the church, lately executed in France."—*History of Protestantism, book 17, chap. 16, paragraph 15.*

But the saints were to be *worn out.* This implies more than outright slaughter. We quote one paragraph from the account of the imprisonment of the Waldenses, when, at the command of Louis XIV., who was the obedient servant of the pope, they had been driven from their valleys:—

"We know not if ever before an entire nation were in prison at once. Yet now it was so. All of the Waldensian race that remained from the sword of their executioners were immured in the dungeons of Piedmont! . . . And how were they treated in prison? As the African slave was treated on the 'middle passage.' They had a sufficiency of neither food nor clothing. The bread dealt out to them was fetid. They had putrid water to drink. They were exposed to the sun by day and to the cold at night. They were compelled to sleep on the bare pavement, or on straw so full of vermin that the stone floor was preferable. Disease broke out in these horrible abodes, and the mortality was fearful. 'When they entered these dungeons,' says Henri Arnaud, 'they counted fourteen thousand healthy mountaineers, but when, at the intercession of the Swiss deputies, their prisons were opened, three thousand skeletons only crawled out."—*Id., book 16, chap. 13, paragraph 18.*

In the above instance, we see how an entire nation was literally worn out, yet we have scarcely more than hinted at the atrocities visited upon the innocent Waldenses. How many millions of martyrs have been put to death in the name of Christianity, by that most unchristian and antichristian power, the papacy, will never be known until the dead, small and great, stand before God. In this way, perhaps, more than by its wonderful pretentions and blasphemous titles, has the papacy spoken great words against the Most High; because, since it professes to be Christian, it has caused the enemies of Christ to revile the Christian religion, which they ignorantly supposed to be responsible for so many outrages. The papacy has done more to make infidels, than all other causes combined.

3. "And think to change times and laws." The papacy has not hesitated to lay impious hands even upon the laws of God, and has remodeled the ten commandments to suit herself. To allow for her image worship, she has expunged the main portion of the second commandment, adding the remainder to the first, and has divided the tenth in order to make the number good. She also openly boasts of having changed the fourth commandment, as the following will show:—

The first question of chapter 23 of "The Catholic Christian Instructed" is this:—

"What are the days which the church *commands* to be kept holy?"

And the answer is:—

"1st, The Sundays, or the Lord's day, which we observe by apostolical tradition, *instead of* the Sabbath," etc. Again the question is asked:—

"What warrant have you for keeping the Sunday, preferable to the ancient Sabbath, which was the Saturday?

"*Answer*—We have for it the authority of the Catholic Church, and apostolical tradition."

It may be said that there is no undue assumption of authority here, since "apostolical tradition" is given as the reason for the church's celebration of Sunday instead of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. But the Catholic Church does not claim that it has any warrant from the Bible for its practice. The next question is:—

"Does the Scripture anywhere command the Sunday to be kept for the Sabbath?"

In answer to this, reference is made to three passages of Scripture, in which the first day of the week is *mentioned*, and then the answer continues:—

"But neither one nor the other tells us that this first day of the week was to be henceforward the day of worship, and the Christian Sabbath, so that truly, the best authority we have for this is the testimony and ordinance of the church. And therefore those who pretend to be so religious observers of the Sunday, whilst they take no notice of other festivals ordained by the same church authority, show that they act by humor, and not by reason and religion; since Sundays and holydays all stand upon the same foundation, viz., the ordinance of the church."

Without stopping to discuss whether or not the Bible authorizes the change from the Sabbath of the commandment to the first day of the week, it is sufficient to note that the Catholic Church *claims* that it has made the change by its own authority, thus arrogating to itself the power to undo the decrees of God. That it does expressly set itself above the Bible, is further shown by the following from "A Sure Way to Find Out the True Religion:"—

"Lastly, the keeping holy the Sunday is a thing absolutely necessary to salvation; and yet this is nowhere put down in the Bible; on the contrary, the Bible says, 'Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy' (Ex. 20:8), which is Saturday, and not Sunday; therefore, the Bible does not contain all things necessary to salvation, and, consequently, cannot be a sufficient rule of faith."—*Pp. 95, 96.*

But the Bible *is* a sure and sufficient guide in all things. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, *thoroughly furnished* unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. "Every word of God is pure; he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Prov. 30: 5, 6. Whatever varies in the slightest degree from the Scripture standard, must be wrong. He who adds to its words will be found to be a liar. Now, since the papacy does add to the words of the Lord, and boasts of its power to do so, it follows that it is one with that system of religion of which Paul says that its votaries "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator." Rom. 1:25. It puts a man in the place of God, and boasts of its power to change the words of God, and to command the consciences of men, contrary to the decrees of God; and thus it exalts itself above God. What greater words could be spoken against the Most High?

Since the Bible alone is the true standard of faith and morals, it is very evident that when any power sets itself above the Bible, corruption must follow. The history of the Roman Catholic Church shows that this is absolutely true. The power that sets itself above God necessarily sets itself against God; but as God is the embodiment of all goodness, that which is opposed to him must be the embodiment of all wickedness. Therefore, according to the prophetic declaration of the assumptions of the papacy, we should expect to see in it the very depths of iniquity. A very few quotations will be given concerning the apostasy which resulted in the full development of "that Wicked," "the man of sin." Dr. Wylie, in his "History of Protestantism," says:—

"The moment inspired men cease to address us, and that their disciples and scholars take their place—men of apostolic spirit and doctrine, no doubt, but without the direct knowledge of their predecessors—we become sensible of a change; an eclipse has passed upon the exceeding glory of the gospel. As we pass from Paul to Clement, and from Clement to the Fathers that succeeded him, we find the gospel becoming less of grace and more of merit. The light wanes as we travel down the patristic road, and remove ourselves farther from the apostolic dawn. It continues for some time at least to be the same

gospel, but its glory is shorn, its mighty force is abated; and we are reminded of the change that seems to pass upon the sun, when after contemplating him in a tropical hemisphere, we see him in a northern sky, where his slanting beams, forcing their way through mists and vapors, are robbed of half their splendor. Seen through the fogs of the patristic age, the gospel scarcely looks the same which had burst upon the world without a cloud but a few centuries before."—*Book 1, chap. 2, paragraph 11.*

The Doctor was more charitable than the facts will warrant, in saying that the Fathers were no doubt men of apostolic spirit and doctrine. They were at best but half Christian, whatever their intentions may have been, for they drank from the muddy pool of heathen philosophy instead of at the pure fountain of divine revelation; and their great effort was to assimilate Christianity and pagan philosophy. In this they succeeded but too well. Again we quote from Wylie:—

"The gates of the sanctuary once forced, the stream of corruption continued to flow with ever-deepening volume. The declensions in doctrine and worship already introduced had changed the brightness of the church's morning into twilight; the descent of the Northern nations, which, beginning in the fifth, continued through several successive centuries, converted that twilight into night. The new tribes had changed their country, but not their superstitions; and, unhappily, there was neither zeal nor vigor in the Christianity of the age to effect their instruction and their genuine conversion. The Bible had been withdrawn; in the pulpit fable had usurped the place of truth; holy lives, whose silent eloquence might have won upon the barbarians, were rarely exemplified; and thus, instead of the church dissipating the superstitions that now encompassed her like a cloud, these superstitions all but quenched her own light. She opened her gates to receive the new peoples as they were. She sprinkled them with the baptismal water; she inscribed their names in her registers; she taught them in their invocations to repeat the titles of the Trinity; but the doctrines of the gospel, which alone can enlighten the understanding, purify the heart, and enrich the life with virtue, she was little careful to inculcate upon them. She folded them within her pale, but they were scarcely more Christian than before, while she was greatly less so."—*Id., book 1, chap. 2, paragraph 8.*

Thus was the church becoming paganized, and not long did it take to complete the transformation. Wylie continues:—

"Apostasy is like the descent of heavy bodies, it proceeds with ever-accelerating velocity. First, lamps were lighted at the tombs of the martyrs; next, the Lord's Supper was celebrated at their graves; next, prayers were offered *for* them and *to* them; next, paintings and images began to disfigure the walls, and corpses to pollute the floors of the churches. Baptism, which apostles required water only to dispense, could not be celebrated without white robes and chrism, milk, honey, and salt. Then came a crowd of church officers whose names and numbers are in striking contrast to the few and simple orders of

men who were employed in the first propagation of Christianity."—*Id.*,

That the church should be corrupted was the inevitable result of the methods employed to make converts. Says the historian:—

"As the lower ranks of society are governed by imitation, the conversion of those who possessed any eminence of birth, of power, or of riches, was soon followed by dependent multitudes. The salvation of the common people was purchased at an easy rate, if it be true that, in one year, twelve thousand men were baptized at Rome, besides a proportionable number of women and children, and that a white garment, with twenty pieces of gold, had been promised by the emperor to every convert."—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, chap. 20, paragraph 18.*

There is no reason to disbelieve this statement, for it is related upon good authority that Gregory Thaumaturgus (Gregory the miracle worker), bishop of Neo-Cæsarea, on the anniversaries of the martyrs (and they were numerous) allowed his flock to give a loose rein to pleasure, to indulge in conviviality, and to do all the things that the worshipers of idols were accustomed to do in their temples, on their festival days, hoping thereby to gain the heathen, and thinking that in process of time they would, as "Christians," voluntarily leave off such customs. (See Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, book 1, cent. 2, part 2, chap. 4, sec. 2, note 3.) This was not an isolated case, for Mosheim says that "the Christian bishops purposely multiplied sacred [?] rites for the sake of rendering the Jews and the pagans more friendly to them." Thus was pure Christianity crowded into obscurity, and that which took its name was in reality paganism with all of its corruption. Speaking of the barbarians who conquered Rome, Wylie says:—

"These rude warriors, who had overturned the throne of the Cæsars, bowed down before the chair of the popes. The evangelization of these tribes was a task of easy accomplishment. The 'Catholic faith,' which they began to exchange for their paganism or Arianism, consisted chiefly in their being able to recite the names of the objects of their worship, which they were left to adore with much the same rites as they had practiced in their native forests. They did not much concern themselves with the study of Christian doctrine, or the practice of Christian virtue. The age furnished but few manuals of the one, and still fewer models of the other."—*History of Protestantism, book 1, chap. 3, paragraph 9.*

How could there be any models of virtue, when the truly virtuous were slaughtered, and the only virtue recognized was adherence to the dogmas of Rome? Henry Charles Lea, in his "History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages," graphically portrays the condition of the papacy. On this point he says, among other things:—

"Uniformity of faith had been enforced by the Inquisition and its methods, and so long as faith was preserved, crime and sin were comparatively unimportant except as a source of revenue to those who sold absolution. As Theodoric Vrie tersely puts it, hell and purgatory would be emptied if enough money could be found. The artificial standard thus created is seen in a revelation of the Virgin to St. Birgitta, that a pope who was free from heresy, no matter how polluted by sin and vice, is not so wicked but that he has the absolute power to bind and loose souls. There are many wicked popes plunged in hell, but all their lawful acts on earth are accepted and confirmed by God, and all priests who are not heretics administer true sacraments, no matter how depraved they may be. Correctness of belief was thus the sole essential; virtue was a wholly subordinate consideration. How completely under such a system religion and morals came to be dissociated is seen in the remarks of Pius II. quoted above, [to the effect] that the Franciscans were excellent theologians, but cared nothing about virtue

"This, in fact, was the direct result of the system of persecution embodied in the Inquisition. Heretics who were admitted to be patterns of virtue were ruthlessly exterminated in the name of Christ, while in the same holy name the orthodox could purchase absolution for the vilest of crimes for a few coins. When the only unpardonable offense was persistence in some trifling error of belief, such as the poverty of Christ; when men had before them the example of their spiritual guides as leaders in vice and debauchery and contempt of sacred things, all the sanctions of morality were destroyed, and the confusion between right and wrong became hopeless. The world has probably never seen a society more vile than that of Europe in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries."—*Vol. 3, pp. 641, 642.*

The custom of selling absolution, which was devised for the purpose of filling up the depleted papal treasury, is one of the worst things that the papacy has ever done against God and his worship. It set at naught the atonement, counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and fastened the world far more securely than it had ever before been in "the bond of iniquity," which must hold those who think that the gift of God can be purchased with money.

Perhaps some may think that the papacy has improved, since we no longer see crimes so openly committed under its sheltering wing. They think that its wickedness was due to the ignorance of the age, and that "advancing civilization" has made such wickedness impossible. Such should remember that "Rome never changes." The only reason why crimes are not so openly committed under its protection is because it has not now the power to protect them. As evidence that the seeming improvement in the character of the papacy is due to lack of power and not to the spread of education, we quote the following:—

"In Italy the revival of letters, while elevating the intellectual faculties, had been accompanied with deeper degradation in both the moral and spiritual condition of society. Without removing superstí-

tion, it had rendered skepticism fashionable, and it had weakened the sanctions of religion without supplying another basis for morality. The world has probably never seen a more defiant disregard of all law, human and divine, than that displayed by both the church and the laity during the pontificates of Sixtus IV. and Innocent VIII. and Alexander VI. [1471–1503.] Increase of culture and of wealth seemed only to afford new attractions and enlarged opportunities for luxury and vice, and from the highest to the lowest there was indulgence of unbridled appetites, with a cynical disregard even of hypocrisy."—*Id., p. 209.*

The principles of the papacy are the same to-day that they were five hundred years ago. Give it the same power that it once had, for an equal length of time, and the same state of things would exist. For the low state of morals in the Middle Ages was not due to the ignorance of those times, but the ignorance that existed was due to the depravity, and both were the direct result of the papal policy. The papal system is as corrupt to-day as it ever was, and it cannot be reformed. It is sin itself, "the man of sin," and for it there can be nothing but perdition. The earth will be freed from its curse only when it is destroyed by the brightness of the coming of the Lord.

But the prophecy continues: "And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." The "they" of course refers to the "saints of the Most High" and the "times and laws," which are mentioned in the same verse. The "time and times and the dividing of time," then, indicates the period of papal supremacy, and of the unlimited reign of lawlessness.

In the first place we may notice that in the Douay Bible, as well as in the revised version, "time and times and the dividing of time," is rendered, "time, and times, and *half* a time." We have no need to conjecture what this means, for the Bible is its own interpreter. In Rev. 12:14 we find the same period of time mentioned: "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." Now in verse 6 of the same chapter the same event is brought to view in these words: "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." From these two verses we learn that "a time, and times, and half a time" is only another expression for twelve hundred and sixty days. Then the little horn of Daniel 7 was to have supremacy for twelve hundred and sixty days.

But the question now arises, "Is it possible that only twelve hundred and sixty days, three years and a half, cover the whole time which the prophecy allows to the papacy?" We answer, No; and the ex-

planation is simple. The prophecy is symbolic; four mighty empires are represented by short-lived beasts; the Roman Catholic power is represented by a little horn of one of these beasts. It is obvious, then, that the prophecy would not be consistent if it should express the duration of those powers in literal years. The time would be out of proportion to the nature of the symbol representing the power. Therefore it is evident that the time must also be symbolic. We inquire, then, What is the standard of time when used in symbolic prophecy? In Eze. 4:4–6 we read the answer:—

"Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it; according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee *the years* of their iniquity, *according to the number of the days*, three hundred and ninety days; so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days; *I have appointed thee each day for a year.*"

Since all prophecy of Scripture proceeds from the same source, and is not of private interpretation (2 Pet. 1:20, 21), the interpretation given to a symbol in one prophecy must be the interpretation of the same symbol in every prophecy; therefore the "time, and times, and half a time," or twelve hundred and sixty days, indicate just twelve hundred and sixty years.

The next question to be settled is, When does this period of time begin and end? There are several dates given by various authors to mark the rise of papal supremacy, but 538 A. D. seems to be the one that has the only just claim to consideration. The prophet, in describing the rise of the little horn, says, "He shall subdue three kings." Dan. 7:24. This is in explanation of the fact that three horns were to be plucked up before it. Of course the only powers that would be rooted up to make room for the Catholic power would be those who were opposed to it. Now long before 538 A. D., paganism, as a State religion in the Roman Empire, was dead. Since the time of Constantine, Rome had been nominally Christian. The barbarous tribes by which the empire was divided into the ten parts, also embraced the Christianity of the empire. Says D'Aubigne:—

"Already the forests of the North had poured forth the most effectual promoters of the papal power. The barbarians who had invaded the West and settled themselves therein,—but recently converted to Christianity,—ignorant of the spiritual character of the church, and feeling the want of an external pomp of religion, prostrated themselves in a half savage and half heathen state of mind at the feet of the chief priest of Rome."—*History of the Reformation, book 1, chap. 1, paragraph 31.*

But not all of these tribes were favorable to the pretensions of the bishops of Rome. Some of them, especially the Heruli, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths, were professedly followers of Arius. The contest between the Catholics and Arians was bitter and unrelenting, and so long as these powers held Italy and the adjacent country, the pope could not assert papal authority. In the year 493 A. D., the power of the Heruli was annihilated by the death of Odoacer. From that time it is impossible to trace them in history. In 534 the Vandals were conquered by Belisarius, the general of Justinian; and in 538 A. D., Rome, which until that time had been in possession of the Arian Ostrogoths, was occupied by the Roman army, and the Catholic religion was established. These conquests are described in detail in the thirty-ninth and forty-first chapters of Gibbon.

When the last of these Arian powers was overthrown (A. D. 538), there was nothing to hinder the bishop of Rome from occupying the proud position for which he had so long been striving. Speaking of the way in which the Roman bishop gradually usurped power over other churches, D'Aubigne says:—

"To silence the cries of the churches, Rome found new allies. Princes, who in those troublesome times often saw their thrones tottering, offered their adherence to the church, in exchange for her support. They yielded to her spiritual authority, on condition of her paying them with secular dominion. They left her to deal at will with the *souls* of men, provided only she would deliver them from their enemies. The power of the hierarchy in the ascending scale, and of the imperial power which was declining, leaned thus one toward the other—and so accelerated their twofold destiny.

"Rome could not lose by this. An edict of Theodosius II. and of Valentinian III. proclaimed the bishop of Rome 'ruler of the whole church.' Justinian issued a similar decree [letter]. These decrees did not contain all that the popes pretended to see in them. But in those times of ignorance it was easy for them to gain reception for that interpretation which was most favorable to themselves."—*Id.*, *paragraphs*

To show plainly the object of these wars against the Arian powers, and what was gained by them, we make two brief quotations from Gibbon. After having rehearsed the defeat of the Vandals and the capture of Carthage by the Romans, the historian speaks as follows concerning Justinian:—

"He received the messengers of victory at the time when he was preparing to publish the pandects of the Roman law; and the devout or jealous emperor celebrated the divine goodness, and confessed, in silence, the merit of his successful general. Impatient to abolish the temporal and spiritual tyranny of the Vandals, he proceeded, without delay, to the full establishment of the Catholic Church. Her jurisdic-

tion, wealth, and immunities, perhaps the most essential part of episcopal religion, were restored and amplified with a liberal hand; the Arian worship was suppressed, the Donatist meetings were proscribed; and the synod of Carthage, by the voice of two hundred and seventeen bishops, applauded the just measure of pious retaliation."—*Decline and Fall, chap. 41, paragraph 11.*

The victory of Belisarius over the Ostrogoths (A. D. 538) is thus described:—

"The Goths consented to retreat in the presence of a victorious enemy; to delay till the next spring the operations of offensive war; to summon their scattered forces; to relinquish their distant possessions, and to trust even Rome itself to the faith of its inhabitants. Leuderis, an aged warrior, was left in the capital with four thousand soldiers; a feeble garrison, which might have seconded the zeal, though it was incapable of opposing the wishes, of the Romans. But a momentary enthusiasm of religion and patriotism was kindled in their minds. They furiously exclaimed that the apostolic throne should no longer be profaned by the triumph or toleration of Arianism; that the tombs of the Cæsars should no longer be trampled by the savages of the North; and, without reflecting that Italy must sink into a province of Constantinople, they fondly hailed the restoration of a Roman emperor as a new era of freedom and prosperity. The deputies of the pope and clergy, of the Senate and people, invited the lieutenant of Justinian to accept their voluntary allegiance, and to enter the city, whose gates would be thrown open for his reception. . . . The first days, which coincided with the old Saturnalia, were devoted to mutual congratulation and the public joy, and the Catholics prepared to celebrate, without a rival, the approaching festival of the nativity of Christ."—*Id., paragraphs 22, 23.*

These quotations show most conclusively that in A. D. 538 the bishop of Rome did become literally "the pope," *i. e.*, the father, or head and ruler, of the churches. The last opposing horn had then been plucked up, and the papacy was free to enter upon that career of ecclesiastical tyranny for which it had long been preparing; and the "mystery of iniquity" which had been working so long was given full liberty.

But since the supremacy of the papacy was to continue twelve hundred and sixty years, it is evident that it must have been checked in the year 1798 A. D. Let us see if at that time anything happened to justify this conclusion. From "Chambers' Cyclopedia," article "Pius," we quote:—

"At length the [French] Directory ordered the invasion of Rome; Berthier entered the city, February 10, 1798, and took possession of the castle of St. Angelo. Pius [VI.] was called on to renounce his temporal sovereignty, and on his refusal, was seized, February 20, and carried away to Siena, and afterwards to the celebrated Certosa, or Carthusian monastery, of Florence. On the threatened advance of the

Austro-Russian army in the following year, he was transferred to Grenoble, and finally to Valence on the Rhone, where, worn out by age and by the rigor of confinement, he died in August, 1799, in the eighty-second year of his age and the twenty-fourth of his pontificate."

Thus we see that from 538 to 1798 A. D. there were twelve hundred and sixty years of unbroken power, plainly fulfilling the prophecy. At that time the power of the papacy was broken; indeed, it might well have been thought to be utterly destroyed. In March, 1800, however, another pope was chosen, and the papacy has continued ever since, but with diminished power. Immediately after the enunciation of the dogma of papal infallibility, July 21, 1870, Victor Emmanuel took advantage of the withdrawal of the French soldiers from Rome, to make that city the capital of his kingdom. Accordingly he entered it on September 20 of the same year, and that day marked the close of the temporal dominion of the pope of Rome, who ever since has sulked in the Vatican, where, in order more effectually to work upon the sympathies of the people, he professes to be a prisoner. From his retreat, like Bunyan's aged pope in his cave, he growls out at those who despise his pretensions, "You will never mend till more of you be burnt;" for his one ambition is the restoration of the papacy to its former power.

Whether this dream will ever be fully realized is not indicated in the prophecy under consideration; yet that, before the end, the power of the papacy will increase far beyond what it is at the present, is plainly set forth in these words:—

"I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Dan. 7:21, 22.

For several years it seemed as though every vestige of the power of the papacy was irrecoverably gone; but "the Scripture cannot be broken," and now, although it has no territorial dominion, there is no kingdom on earth that approaches it in power. The pope rules not only the vast host of Catholics in every land under the sun, nearly all of whom hold their allegiance to him above that which they owe to their civil rulers, but he rules nations. Not alone is his influence supreme in Catholic countries, but governments professedly Protestant look to him for help in difficult places. Germany, which so long opposed him, is now virtually subject to his dictation; England has invited him to help her settle her troubles with Ireland; the Czar of Russia has made overtures to him, as he needs his help in dealing with nihilism. When the papal delegates came to America to bring to Cardinal Gibbons the insignia of his office, a government vessel was

ROME.

"And behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns." Dan. vii. 7.

sent out to meet them, and, on its return with them on board, the papal flag floated from the mast-head, in the place of the stars and stripes. On the occasion of the jubilee of Pope Leo XIII., Sweden and Italy were the only nations that did not send him presents and congratulations.

The *Christian Union* (January 26, 1888) said that the presentation to Pope Leo XIII. of a copy of the Constitution of the United States, by the President, was "a sensible way of discharging what was, under the circumstances, almost a matter of national obligation." And it gave, as a reason for this extraordinary statement, the still more extraordinary statement that "the pope is a temporal prince, and the amenities which are paid to temporal princes are due him." It further said: "It is not impossible that the time may come when the old antagonism of the Catholic and the Protestant may appear insignificant in view of the deeper antagonisms which shall make them essentially one. . . . Stranger things have happened in history than such a change of attitute as would be involved in the fellowship of the Roman Catholic and the Protestant."

About the same time the Rev. Dr. Henry M. Field, editor of the New York *Evangelist* (Presbyterian), said through his paper:—

"The late President Hitchcock [of Union Theological Seminary] often said to us, when we discussed the dangers to society from socialists and communists, that we might yet come to look upon the Roman Catholic Church as the most conservative power in the country, if, by its influence of the Irish, it should keep them from running into the excesses by which so many of the French and Germans were carried away. . . . Here is a tremendous power exercised over millions of our countrymen, and it is the height of folly and fanaticism to alienate it from us by standing always in an attitude of antagonism."

Other Protestant divines say that Catholicism is the only power that can stay the tide of socialism and anarchy, and openly counsel an alliance between Catholicism and Protestantism. In the *Christian at Work* (April 12 and 19, 1888) Prof. Charles A. Briggs, of Union Theological Seminary, New York, had an article entitled, "Is Rome an Ally or an Enemy, or Both?" in which he noted a few points of difference in matters which he considered non-essentials, but said: "In all matters of worship we are in essential concord with Roman Catholics, and we ought not to hesitate to make an alliance with them so far as possible to maintain the sanctity of the Sabbath as a day of worship," etc.

And again:—

"It is true that there is a great deal of immorality in the Roman Catholic Church in some countries, and we think it may be shown that

as a rule Protestantism is productive of better morals than Romanism; but this, after all, is a question of more or less, and, to say the least, Protestantism has little to boast of. On all these questions it is of the highest importance that the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant churches should make an alliance."

As showing the progress toward this alliance, it is necessary only to state that during "Holy Week" of 1888, union services of the Catholic and all the Protestant churches were held in various cities in the United States. Various Protestant journals speak of the pope as "Holy Father," wish him "a long reign and Godspeed in his liberalizing policy," and in many ways show their willingness to allow him whatever he may claim.

One more item, and it is a most significant one, must suffice on this point. In "Protestant" Germany, in the city of Cassel, where the majority of churches are Lutheran, a Rev. Thümmel was indicted sometime in the year 1888, for attacking the papacy and calling the pope antichrist. In moving for nine months' imprisonment for Mr. Thümmel, the prosecuting attorney said:—

"The defendant refers (or appeals) to Dr. M. Luther. First, it must be considered that Luther lived three hundred years ago, and that meanwhile the customs, the tone, and tastes, etc., have changed. If Luther lived to-day, and should say and write the same things that he did then, he would undoubtedly, by reason of section 166 of the Penal Code, be condemned."

History is making rapidly, and the student of prophecy will not have long to wait to see what shall be the end of all these things. Of one thing he may be certain, that "the triumphing of the wicked is short," and when the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth shall say, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow," then shall her plagues come upon her in one day,—death and mourning, and famine, and "she shall be utterly burned with fire." The more rapidly the power and influence of the papacy revives, the sooner will the Lord consume "that Wicked" with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy it with the brightness of his coming (2 Thess. 2:8); and then "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. 7:27.

"He comes not an infant in Bethlehem born,
He comes not to lie in a manger;
He comes not again to be treated with scorn,
He comes not a shelterless stranger;
He comes not to Gethsemane,
To weep and sweat blood in the garden;
He comes not to die on the tree,
To purchase for rebels a pardon.
Oh, no; glory, bright glory—
Environs him now."

"LET not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1–3.

These words were spoken by our Saviour himself, in his talk to his disciples, in the evening of the day on which he was crucified. He had been with them in constant companionship for over three years, and besides the tie of personal love which bound them to him, they had given him reverence as "the Christ, the Son of the living God," and had "trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." They had looked for a speedy deliverance from the Roman yoke, and now consternation and grief had taken hold of their hearts as they listened to his words: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you." John 13:33. Peter voiced the common desire, and said, "Lord, whither goest thou?" and to this

question the Saviour replied, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards." And then, in the words quoted at the beginning of this chapter, he proceeded to comfort their troubled hearts, telling them how and when they could follow him and be with him.

The "glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13), is the "blessed hope" that is set before the church of Christ. It has been the hope of the church in all ages. As has been shown in preceding chapters, the ancient prophets foretold in minutest detail "the sufferings of Christ," and at his first advent the "sure word of prophecy" was fulfilled to the letter; but "the glory that should follow" was, as has also been shown, no less the theme of inspired penmen, and the followers of Christ were pointed forward to the time when his glory should be revealed, as the time when they also should "appear with him in glory," and "be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Peter 4:13; Col. 3:4. It was with this hope that our Saviour comforted his sorrowing disciples.

That Christ will come again, is as sure as that he was once here upon earth, and that he is now "gone into Heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." 1 Peter 3:22. Said he, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself." He was here; he has gone; and he will certainly come again. This is the testimony of Christ himself, and of all the holy men in whom was his Spirit.

"I will come *again*." This means "another time; once more." Not thousands of times, as they would have us believe, who claim that in fulfillment of his promise he comes whenever a saint dies, but only *once more* will he come again, to consummate the great plan of salvation. To this the apostle bears emphatic testimony, in these words: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear *the second time* without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:27, 28. It is appointed unto men once to die; in order that men might have life, Christ was once offered for sin, bearing "our sins in his own body on the tree;" and so, when his work for sinners shall have been finished, he will come once more—"the second time"—not bearing the sins of the world, as at his first advent, but for the salvation of those who, by means of his sacrifice and mediation, have "put away sin."

The fact having been settled beyond all controversy, that Christ will come to this earth again, three questions naturally arise in our minds, namely: How will he come? Why will he come? and, When

will he come? These questions must be answered by the Bible, if they are answered at all, and to it we will turn for light. Anything that throws light upon Christ's second coming must be of first importance.

As to the manner of his coming we need not remain long in doubt. As the disciples stood gazing up into heaven after their ascending Lord, two shining ones—messengers from the heavenly courts—appeared and said to them: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11. And how did he go into heaven? The same writer who records this, says of Christ's ascension: "And he led them [his disciples] out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." Luke 24:50, 51. Even "while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Acts 1:9. So his coming will be personal and visible. Said the angels, "*This same Jesus*, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Says Paul, "*The Lord himself* shall descend from heaven with a shout." 1 Thess. 4:16. It will be the same one who was baptized by John in the Jordan, and who from that day "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil;" the same one who, wearied and faint, sat by Jacob's well, and found refreshment in revealing to a poor sinner the fountain of living water; the very one who by wicked hands was crucified and slain, being "wounded for our transgressions," and "bruised for our iniquities;" the one who was placed by loving hands in Joseph's new tomb, "whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." "This *same Jesus*" who ascended bodily into heaven, while the disciples beheld, will return in the same manner that he ascended.

It was the knowledge that Christ himself would come in person, that animated the patriarch in his deep affliction, when he said: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." Job 19:25–27. "Whom I shall see for myself, and not a stranger," is the reading according to the margin. And this serves to connect the hope of the patriarch with the promise of Christ. The disciples mourned the anticipated departure of the Saviour, as that of a dear friend and companion, as well as the one who should redeem Israel; and the patriarch triumphed, even

in his sore distress, in the thought that when his Redeemer should stand at the latter day upon the earth, he should see in him a friend, and not a stranger. Happy is the man whose acquaintance with Christ is such that he can look forward to his return with the same fond anticipation.

Jesus "shall so come in like manner" as he went into heaven. How did he go? While they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. Then when he comes a cloud will attend him, and he will be seen. And the beloved disciple testified: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." Rev. 1:7. Again he says, describing his prophetic vision: "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle." Rev. 14:14. Christ, speaking of events connected with his coming, said: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matt. 24:30.

Now notice how the coming of Christ will correspond to his departure. When he departed, a cloud received him out of sight; so the cloud must have been the last thing seen. When he shall come again, the first thing that will be seen will be a white cloud. This will be "the sign of the Son of man in heaven." Then as it draws nearer, the form of Jesus will be discerned, sitting upon the cloud, and then all his glory will be revealed.

He will come as he departed. But whereas only a few saw him go away, "every eye shall see him" when he returns. He will come "in the glory of his Father" (Matt. 16:27), accompanied by "all the holy angels." Matt. 25:31. He will then "sit upon the throne of his glory," and "a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." Ps. 50:3. He shall descend "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (1 Thess. 4:16), and "the heavens and earth shall shake" (Joel 3:16). None will be able to hide from their eyes "the brightness of his coming;" "for as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven, so shall also the Son of man be in his day." Luke 17:24. Surely the question, "How will he come?" is sufficiently answered.

Why will he come? Because if he should not come the second time, his first coming would have been in vain. Said he, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." He comes to take to

himself the purchase of his own blood. He has gone to prepare a place for those who become his friends indeed, and when he has the place prepared for them, he will come and take them to it. His coming will be the grand consummation of the plan of salvation. In vain would be all his sufferings for men; in vain would be the faith which men have placed in him, if he should not return to complete that which he has begun.

Christ's words imply that if he should not come, his disciples could not be with him. Notice: He said he would come to receive them to himself, *that* (in order that) where he was there they might be also. The object of his coming is to take his people to himself. Now it is evident that Christ does not do things that are unnecessary, but it would be unnecessary for him to come for his people, if they could be with him without his coming. Not only so, but it would be the height of folly for him to come for his disciples if they went to be with him when they died, hundreds of years ago. So the fact that Christ will come for his people, is evidence that they cannot be with him until he comes.

Since Christ's followers cannot be with him until he comes, then they all will receive their reward at the same time. To this the apostle bears witness, when, speaking of the faithfulness of past ages, he says: "These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11:39, 40. And again the apostle Paul says: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [go before] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up *together with them* in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:15–17. "So," that is by the resurrection of the dead and the translation of the living, at the coming of Christ, will the Saviour's promise be fulfilled, to take his people to himself, to be with him.

But the taking of his people to himself involves something else. The earth is the kingdom which God prepared for his people "from the foundation of the world." Compare Matt. 25:34 and Gen. 1:26; Ps. 8:6. To the meek it is promised that they shall inherit the earth. Matt. 5:5. They "shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Ps. 37:11. But this cannot be done while the wicked remain upon it; for "there is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked;" they are continually troubling, not only themselves, but

others (Job. 3:17; 2 Tim. 3:12, 13); and "are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." Isa. 57:20. Therefore before the righteous can delight themselves in "the abundance of peace," the wicked must be removed from the earth. And so when, in prophetic vision, John saw the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, he heard the elders around the throne in Heaven say: "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou has taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which corrupt the earth." Rev. 11: 17, 18, margin. Christ himself said that when he should come, it would be to "reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16:27. So, then, his coming means the salvation of the righteous, and the destruction of the wicked.

A few words as to the manner in which the final redemption of the righteous will be effected, may be in place. The apostle Paul tells us that it will be by the resurrection of the dead, and the translation of the living. To the Corinthian church he wrote:—

"Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Cor. 15:51–54.

Thus the righteous enter into their eternal reward; but not immediately do they dwell on the earth. The earth must still be fitted for their dwelling-place, by the destruction of those who have corrupted it. When Christ appears in the clouds of heaven, in power and great glory, the righteous, because they are righteous, are strengthened to behold his glory; but the wicked cannot endure it. Says Isaiah: "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." Isa. 11:4. And the apostle Paul, speaking of "the man of sin,"—"that Wicked,"—says that he is the one "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." 2 Thess. 2:8.

This, however, is not the final destruction of the wicked, and the cleansing of the earth, for the millions who have died in sin lie all this

time in their graves, unconscious of the wonderful events that are taking place on the earth. Not at that time do they receive the recompense for their evil deeds. Neither do the wicked who are alive at the time of Christ's appearing, and who are slain by the brightness of his coming, receive their punishment at that time. They simply drop dead, unable to endure the dazzling glory of Christ's presence. "And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground." Jer. 25:33.

The condition of the earth at that time is thus described by the prophets:—

"Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled; suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment. . . . For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding; they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. [Compare Gen. 1:2.] I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end." Jer. 4:20–27.

"Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare; for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and *after many days* shall they be visited." Isa. 24:17–22.

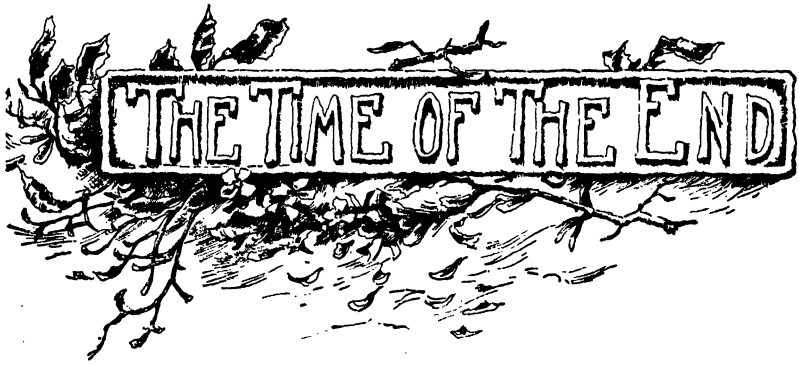
The earth will then be in its original chaotic state; in the condition described as "the deep," "the abyss," or the "bottomless pit." Upon this dark, dreary, desolate place, Satan will be left for a thousand years. Says the prophet: "And I saw an angel come down from

heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season." Rev. 20: 1–3. Unable to practice any of his hellish deceptions upon men, because there are no living men upon the earth, he is most effectually bound. No human convict in solitary confinement in the dark cell was ever more surely deprived of liberty.

During that thousand years the righteous will be in Heaven, engaged with Christ, in passing judgment upon fallen angels and wicked men. See Rev. 20: 4; 1 Cor. 6: 1–3. This period of one thousand years comprises the "many days," at the end of which the wicked are to "be visited." At the end of that time Satan shall be loosed from his prison, because the wicked will then be raised (Rev. 20: 5), and he will have opportunity to practice for a little season the deceptive arts which are his very life. The holy city, the New Jerusalem, will have descended from God out of Heaven, and Satan will gather the hosts of the wicked around it, making them believe that they can capture it for their own. Rev. 20: 8, 9. And then fire shall come down from God out of Heaven, and shall devour Satan and all his hosts. That fire shall burn as an oven, and the proud and all that do wickedly shall be stubble; and the fire shall burn them up, and shall leave neither root nor branch. Mal. 4: 1.

The same fire that causes "the perdition of ungodly men," will also melt the earth, and purify it from the curse, so that from it shall come forth a renewed earth, fitted for the abode of righteousness. 2 Peter 3: 7, 9, 12, 13. The righteous, safe in the city of God, and thus enabled to "dwell with everlasting burnings" (Isa. 33: 14, 15), shall "meditate terror" which shall not come nigh them; for only with their eyes shall they behold and see the reward of the wicked. Then when the wicked shall have been consumed "like stubble fully dry," and the fires cease for lack of fuel upon which to feed, the righteous shall go forth to inherit the land forever; "they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations;" yes, "they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineand drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat it of them;" and then they "shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." "Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteous-

ness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." Then the "people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places." Isa. 32: 16–18. "For the Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein; thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."



But "when shall these things be?" This is an important question. When Christ had pointed to the wondrous buildings of the temple and said: "See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down," the disciples connecting this catastrophe with the end of all things came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. 24: 2, 3. There are some who tell us that we have no business to inquire anything about the time of Christ's coming. If that were so, what a good opportunity Jesus had to emphasize the fact when his disciples asked him the question just quoted so that they should never forget it. Did he say to them, "Don't bother your heads with such questions; you'll know when it comes?" Not at all. Not a word of censure or reproof did he utter, but simply said, "Take heed that no man deceive you." And then he proceeded to give them certain infallible signs by which they might know when his coming should be near, and so avoid being imposed upon.

It is true that further on in this twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew the Saviour said: "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of Heaven, but my Father only" (verse 36); yet just before

that he had said that when certain signs had come to pass, they should *know* that his coming was near, "even at the doors." Verse 33. Therefore we conclude that while it is impossible for anybody to tell the day of Christ's coming, it is our duty to know when it is near. So Paul writes to the Thessalonian brethren, saying, "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you." 1 Thess. 5 : 1. What times and seasons were the Thessalonians so familiar with? Why, the times and the seasons of the coming of the Lord to raise the righteous dead and translate the living saints, which was the event then under consideration. (See 1 Thess. 4 : 16–18.)

"But," says one, "Paul goes right on to say that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." So he does; but to whom? Why, to those who are dwelling at ease, saying, "Peace and safety." 1 Thess. 5 : 3. He immediately adds : "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of the light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness." Verses 4, 5. It is only the children of the night, and of the darkness, therefore, to whom the day of the Lord will come as a thief.

The same idea is expressed by the Saviour in Luke 21 : 34, 35 : "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." Christians are not "dwellers" on this earth, but only *sojourners*. See 1 Peter 1 : 17; 2 : 11; Heb. 11 : 13; Ps. 39 : 12. Those who have no thought or care but to live on this earth, whose "inward thought is, that their houses shall continue forever, and their dwelling-places to all generations," will be immersed in the cares of this life, and will of course be surprised by the coming of the day of the Lord. But our Saviour very plainly teaches that those who take heed to themselves, and do not become overcharged with surfeiting, drunkenness, and cares of this life, will not be overtaken as by a thief, when the day of the Lord shall come. Therefore we are not only warranted in looking for the coming of our Lord, and studying the signs which betoken its near approach, but we are in duty bound to do so.

The dream which was given to Nebuchadnezzar, and which Daniel explained, was given him in order that he might know "what shall be in the latter days." Dan. 2 : 28. And in our brief study of the prophecies of the book of Daniel we have seen that they are all way-marks, indicating the time of the end. Thus, by the second chapter we are brought down to the time of the complete division of the Roman

Empire into ten parts; and the next thing mentioned is the setting up of God's everlasting kingdom. In the seventh chapter we are brought down still closer to the day of the Lord, to the close of papal supremacy, in 1798; and the next great event is the time when the saints shall possess the kingdom. There is not a chain of prophecy that does not culminate in the glorious coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But of all the prophecies of the Bible, the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew gives the most definite information concerning the time of the coming of the Lord. Let us see what we can learn from it, with reference to that important event.

Notice the question which the disciples asked: "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" They did not ask if he would come again, for there was no question in their minds on that subject. They did not ask him how he would come, for they had no idea of any other manner of coming but a personal coming. They simply asked him as to the time of an event which they had no doubt would take place. Therefore since Jesus did not rebuke their curiosity, but proceeded to answer their question, we must conclude that he told them something concerning the time of his coming. And so we shall find that to be the one great burden of this chapter, of which we shall now give a brief exposition.

In response to the question of the disciples, Jesus said: "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." Verses 4, 5. We cannot agree with those commentators who find the entire fulfillment of this prediction in the numerous pseudo-messiahs that appeared in the first few centuries. There are two reasons why Jesus could not have had sole reference to these: 1. The subject of discourse was the second coming of Christ. The disciples having asked Jesus concerning the signs of his second advent, he replied, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ." It is evident that the warning of Jesus was against being deceived on the very point about which they were asking. 2. Only those who did not believe that Jesus was the Christ, could be deceived by false messiahs. The disciples, to whom Jesus was talking privately, did fully believe that Jesus was "that Christ, the Son of the living God." Therefore there could have been no propriety in warning them against being deceived by men who should profess to have come only in fulfillment of the prophecies which predicted the first advent of Christ. Of course we must remember that while this discourse was delivered to the disciples who followed Christ in his earthly ministry, it is just as directly addressed to his people in all subsequent ages to the end of time. We conclude, therefore,

the warning against false christs, with which Jesus began this discourse, had in view the false christs mentioned in verses 23, 24.

"And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Verses 6–14.

There cannot be the slightest doubt but that in these verses we are carried rapidly over the history of the world till the end of time. The "end" spoken of in verses 13 and 14 must of course refer to "the end of the world," concerning which the disciples asked, and which is identical with the second coming of Christ. The end of the world is the time of the harvest. Matt. 13:39. But it is at the time of the harvest that the Son of man comes to reap the earth (Rev. 14:14); and it is then that he sends forth his angels to gather his people. (Compare Matt. 13:40, 41; 24:30, 31.) Therefore in the verses just quoted, the Saviour gave—not an answer to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"—but a brief statement of facts to prepare their minds for the direct answer to that question.

It can be set down, therefore, that wars and rumors of wars are not positive signs of the near coming of Christ. They are not signs by which we can tell anything about how near that event is. As a matter of fact, there were no general uprisings of nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, until about three hundred years after the time of Christ, when the dismemberment of Rome by the barbarous nations of the North began. But although in these invasions, the country was devastated, and great numbers of people were slaughtered, the suffering did not approach that which the Christians had to endure on account of their faith. In verses 9 and 10 we have reference both to the pagan and the papal persecutions; and not only to those, but to all the persecutions for conscience' sake that shall take place before the Lord comes. For that there will be persecutions clear down till the coming of the Lord, is shown by both the prophet Daniel and the apostle Paul. Says the prophet, speaking of the papacy under the symbol of the little horn:

"I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Dan. 7: 21, 22. And Paul says that in the last days men will be false accusers, fierce, despisers of those that are good, and that "*all* that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Tim. 3:12.

Persecution, however, is not the worst thing that the church has had and will have to encounter. The times of greatest persecution have been the times of the church's greatest purity and devotion. The church's greatest danger has been and will ever be from false teachers (false prophets) who draw thousands into error and eternal ruin by their pleasing sophistries. "One sinner destroyeth much good," says Solomon; and certainly no sinners are greater, or more capable of destroying good, than those who conceal their iniquity by a cloak of pretended righteousness, stealing the livery of the court of Heaven to serve the devil in. Jude speaks thus of them: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Jude 4. Peter also, who addressed his second epistle "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," which includes all Christians, says, after speaking of the prophecies of old time:—

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you." 2 Peter 2: 1–3.

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." The iniquity here referred to is not simply the iniquity of the worldling, but is iniquity which should cause the love of many to wax cold. Now the iniquity of a wicked man cannot cause the love of a righteous man to grow cold, unless the righteous man becomes contaminated by the wickedness. This is contemplated by the text, and is a consequence of the deceptions practiced by false teachers. So long as men cling to and love the pure doctrines of the Bible, they are safe; but the acceptance of false doctrines must necessarily lead to the practice of iniquity. Sound doctrine is the foundation and conservator of all morality; it is the rock upon which a man must build if he would have

his house stand against the flood which the archenemy brings in. He who accepts false doctrine, no matter whether he is deceived, or does it willfully, builds his house upon the sand. From both profane and sacred history we know that the early centuries of the Christian era witnessed a terrible "falling away" from the purity of Christian faith and practice; and Paul tells us that "in the last days" a worse state still may be expected. 2 Tim. 3:1–5, 13. But he that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." James 1:12.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14. This verse has given rise to much speculation and contention, which was all unnecessary. Some have supposed that the "end" cannot refer to the coming of Christ, because they say that the gospel was preached in all the world long ago, and the Lord has not come yet; while others claim that the destruction of Jerusalem must have been the coming of the Lord, that is everywhere referred to in this chapter. It is a fact that Paul says of the "glad tidings of good things" that "their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Rom. 10:18. And again he says that the gospel "was preached to every creature which is under heaven." Col. 1:23. Now how shall we reconcile these statements with Christ's statement that the end should come as soon as "this gospel of the kingdom" should be "preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations"? A brief examination of a few texts of Scripture, letting every part of the text under consideration have its full weight, will settle this question.

First, let it be borne in mind that it is "this gospel of the kingdom" which is to be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, before the end can come. That term can mean nothing else than the good news of the near approach of Christ in his kingdom. Now while the apostles taught, and the early disciples believed in, the second advent of our Lord, they did not teach nor expect that it was to take place in their day. In every one of his epistles Paul had something to say about the second coming of Christ; but he expressly warned the people against thinking that it was to occur immediately. Some of the Thessalonian brethren had gotten the idea, partly by a misunderstanding of Paul's first letter to them, and partly by letters forged in Paul's name, that the coming of the Lord was imminent, and to them the apostle wrote as follows:—

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus

Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thess. 2 : 1–4.

And then he goes on to remind them that when he was with them he had told them these things, how that the great apostasy must take place, and the papacy must be established and run its course, before the coming of the Lord; "for thus it is written by the prophet." (See Daniel 7.) And even in the chapter under consideration, our Saviour introduces the same thing, speaking of the "great tribulation" that should come, and how his disciples should be hated of all nations, for his sake, and should be afflicted and put to death. Still further, he tells of signs to take place after the passing of that great apostasy and consequent tribulation, before he should come. Therefore we must conclude that "this gospel of the kingdom" has never yet been preached "in all the world, as a witness unto all nations." When that shall have been done, then, as surely as the Scriptures are the infallible word of God, the end will come. That time is doubtless nearer than most people imagine.

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand), then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains; let him which is on the house-top not come down to take anything out of his house; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes." Matt. 24 : 15–18.

In thus foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem (compare verse 14 with Luke 21 : 20), the Saviour answered the question, "When shall these things be?" which the disciples had asked when Jesus said that the time should come that there should not be one stone of the temple left upon another, that should not be thrown down. Some have thought that all the references to the coming of the Lord, and all the predictions of this chapter, found their fulfillment at the destruction of Jerusalem, simply because that event is here introduced. But that this is a mistake ought to be evident to anyone who reads the chapter, and who has any just sense of the meaning of language.

When Christ comes it will be as the lightning that shines from the east to the west, over the whole heaven. Matt. 24 : 27; Luke 17 : 24. Nothing that could be likened to such a phenomenon took place at the destruction of Jerusalem.

Before the coming of the Lord the sun was to be darkened, and the moon was to withhold her light, and the stars were to fall (Matt. 24:29; Joel 2:31); history contains no record of anything like any such occurrences between the time of Christ's ascension and the destruction of Jerusalem.

When Christ comes, "*the Lord himself* shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. 4:16. To apply this language to the coming of Titus and his Roman legions to Jerusalem, is little less than sacrilege.

When Christ comes "all the tribes of the earth" shall mourn. Matt. 24:30. The destruction of Jerusalem fell a long way short of affecting one-half of "all the tribes of the earth." Some of "the tribes of the earth," especially the Romans, rejoiced greatly at its destruction.

When the Son of man comes, "he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds" (Matt. 24:31), and the dead shall at the same time be raised incorruptible (1 Cor. 15:52); but none can be found so rash as to suggest that anything of the kind occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem. There was no gathering of the righteous, but a scattering of both righteous and wicked; no raising of the dead, but an immense slaughter of the living.

But why carry the contrast further? Since the language of the Bible cannot be tortured so as to give the slightest color to the claim that the destruction of Jerusalem and the coming of Christ are identical, we may well leave those who make so monstrous an assertion, to face their conflict with the Bible the best they can.

Why, then, did the Lord introduce the subject of the destruction of Jerusalem into this discourse? For the simple reason that the disciples had asked concerning it, and he wanted, besides satisfying their curiosity, to let his faithful followers know when to flee from the ill-fated city, in order to save their lives. When they should see Jerusalem encompassed with armies (see Luke 21:20) then they were to know that the desolation which is spoken of in Luke 19:41–44 was at hand, and were to seize the first opportunity to escape. It would naturally seem as though it would be then too late to escape; but the Lord makes no mistakes in his warnings, and we are told that after Jerusalem had been invested by the Romans, and the people of the city had been reduced almost to the last extremity, Cestius, the Roman general, "retired from the city, without any reason in the world." (See Josephus, Wars of the Jews, book 2, chap. 19.) This afforded an opportunity for those who treasured the words of Christ, to carry out his instructions, and to flee at once for their lives.

Besides the fact that it was necessary to speak of the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, in order to answer the question put to Jesus by his disciples, and to provide for their safety, there is another reason why it could fittingly come in just as it does; and that is that the destruction of Jerusalem, with its fearful scenes, was a miniature likeness of the final destruction of the wicked, at the coming of Christ. Isaiah says of the time when Christ shall dash the heathen in pieces: "For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire." Isa. 9:5. And the horrors attendant upon the destruction of Jerusalem were so great that one who reads the account of that slaughter and conflagration can scarcely imagine anything greater, except in extent, even at the last day. "The siege and capture of Jerusalem by Titus," says William Ralph Inge, in "Society in Rome under the Cæsars," p. 51, "was perhaps the most murderous of Roman victories." And Josephus says (preface of The Wars of the Jews): "The war which the Jews made with the Romans hath been the greatest of all those, not only that have been in our times, but, in a manner, of those that ever were heard of; both of those wherein cities have fought against cities, or nations against nations."

Now what may be called the "perspective view" is very common in the Scriptures. That is, two things widely separated in point of time, yet having features in common, are spoken of together, without any notice being taken of the intervening time. As the prophets looked down the stream of time, two events, somewhat similar in character, came within the line of their vision. So far as their view could discern, both of these events might occur at one time, just as two trees many rods apart will appear, to one who stands in range with them, to be standing close together. This explains why in the Old Testament judgments upon ancient cities, as Tyre and Nineveh and Babylon, are foretold in such immediate connection with the announcements of the final Judgment of the whole earth, that it is almost impossible to tell where one ends and the other begins; and in some cases the prophetic accounts overlap, so that a portion of the description applies equally to each event. Of course Christ did not labor under the disadvantages that the prophets did, and he knew very well that his coming would not be until hundreds of years after the destruction of Jerusalem; yet the "perspective view" of the two events is given, and it cannot be denied that a small portion of his language applies equally to each. Nevertheless, he has so fully distinguished between them that no careful reader of the Bible is in danger of confounding them.

"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except

those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Matt. 24:21, 22.

In these verses is the point where all reference to the destruction of Jerusalem ceases, and where the account of the signs indicating the Lord's coming is resumed. The greater part of these verses undoubtedly refers to the great persecution under the papal supremacy. For although there was great tribulation when Jerusalem was destroyed, the Lamentations of Jeremiah indicate that almost if not quite as great horrors attended the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. That the language applies mostly to some other tribulation than that at the destruction of Jerusalem is evident from the words, "And except those days should be shortened, there should be no flesh saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Now the shortening of the days of tribulation in Jerusalem could not have any effect whatever upon the "elect;" for none can be called the elect except those who heed the words of Christ; and all who regarded the words of Christ must have fled at the specified time, before the horrors of the siege and the victory appeared. We therefore conclude that taking the destruction of Jerusalem as a starting-point, in verse 21, he includes in the term "great tribulation" the tribulation consequent upon the pagan persecution of Christians, and the greater tribulation that accompanied the persecutions of the church by the papacy.

The papal supremacy lasted, as we have learned in a previous chapter, from A. D. 538 to A. D. 1798. During all this time the Catholic Church had power to persecute, or to instigate persecution. But of course there was not constant persecution, because there was not constant open opposition to its monstrous claims. Nevertheless, during a great deal of that period it did "wear out the saints," just as the prophecy had foretold. No other term could so fully express just the way the papacy dealt with the true people of God. It literally wore them out. Not content with killing a victim outright, the inquisitors—the executioners of the church—would wear his life out by slow tortures, vying with the barbarous savage in refinements of cruelty. And this they kept up until they had all but worn out all the saints of God. Indeed, this would have been done if God had not in mercy ordered that "those days" of tribulation should be shortened. Because of this, a remnant was left to keep the knowledge of the truth in the earth.

Now can we find out how and when they were curtailed? We can, if we can find out the greatest source of the tribulation; and for that we have not far to seek. A Catholic writer has acknowledged that it was the Inquisition that saved Italy from lapsing into Protestantism. But the Inquisition and Jesuitism can scarcely be separated.

Although the spirit of the Inquisition had existed from the beginning of the great apostasy, the Inquisition itself came into existence just about the time that the order of Jesuits originated. It was a fit tool for such an organization. By means of it the Jesuits well-nigh blotted Christianity from the earth, by destroying all true Christians. But the word of God had declared that the days of tribulation should be cut short, and so they were. The Reformation spread so greatly in some of the countries of Europe that the rulers would not obey the mandates of the Catholic Church. Then, too, Jesuitism threatened to swallow up the church, and become master instead of servant, and so in the year 1773, Pope Clement XIV. issued a bull declaring the order of Jesuits dissolved. This tended to peace and quiet; and although there were not a few instances of persecution after that time, there was never any such persecution as would warrant the term "tribulation." We may say, therefore, that the days of tribulation came to an end about twenty-five years before the close of the days of papal supremacy. Then comes the time of the end.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. 24:29–31.

In these verses we are carried rapidly over the time from the close of the days of tribulation to the coming of the Lord. Right here come in the signs which show in the clearest possible manner that the Saviour's coming is near. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light."

The record in Mark locates this sign still more definitely. Thus: "But *in those days, after that tribulation*, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." Mark 13:24. What could be more definite than this? In the year A. D. 31 our Saviour predicted that, before the close of the period of papal supremacy, but after the terrible, wholesale persecution had ceased, the sun and moon should be darkened. In other words, he said in effect that the sun and moon should be darkened between the years 1773 and 1798. Now read the following from "Webster's Unabridged Dictionary," in the department of "Noted Names," etc.:—

"DARK DAY, THE, MAY 19, 1780.—So called on account of a remarkable darkness on that day extending over all New England. In some places, persons could not see to read common print in the open air for several hours together. Birds sang their evening song, disappeared, and became silent; fowls went to roost; cattle sought the barn-yard; and candles were lighted in the houses. The obscuration began about ten o'clock in the morning, and continued till the middle of the next night, but with differences of degree and duration in different places. For several days previous, the wind had been variable, but chiefly from the southwest and the northeast. The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known."

Many similar testimonies might be given, but this is sufficient to establish the fact. Says the writer, "The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known." It was not caused by an eclipse, for the moon was full; besides this, the length of the period of darkness, and its intensity, would prove it to have been caused by something besides an eclipse, even if the moon had not been full. One writer says that greater darkness could not be imagined, even though we should conceive of every luminous body being blotted from the heavens. It was almost like the Egyptian darkness, that could be felt. Says the astronomer Herschel:—

"The dark day in Northern America was one of those wonderful phenomena of nature which will always be read with interest, but which philosophy is at a loss to explain."

But even though somebody could give an explanation of that wonderful darkness, that would not affect it in the least as a sign of the day of the Lord. The fact that the sun was darkened at the very time that the Saviour said it would be, shows that it was one of the great signs which God has hung out to let us know whereabouts we are in the history of the world.

This wonderful sign was presented to the apostle John, in vision, and he describes it thus: "The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood." Rev. 6:12. So it was on this occasion. The unnatural darkness lasted till far into the night, when the

sky assumed its ordinary appearance, but the moon had the appearance of blood.

"And the stars shall fall from heaven." This was literally fulfilled on the night of November 13, 1833. Before describing this sign, it may be in place to notice a question that sometimes arises, namely, "Why should not this sign, according to the specifications of the prophecy, have occurred in those days after that tribulation?" The answer is that the prophecy does not necessarily locate it there. The first sign must have come within that limit; but the Saviour went right on with the next sign, and without any break in language he told of the shaking of the powers of the heavens, which occurs in immediate connection with Christ's appearing, and could not, of course, have come within the period of papal supremacy. This shows that we need not necessarily look within that period for the fulfillment of any of the signs, except the darkening of the sun. The *Christian Advocate and Journal*, of December 13, 1833, said of the falling of the stars:—

"The meteoric phenomenon which occurred on the morning of the 13th of November last was of so extraordinary and interesting a character as to be entitled to more than a mere passing notice. . . . The lively and graphic descriptions which have appeared in various public journals do not exceed the reality. No language, indeed, can come up to the splendor of that magnificent display; and I hesitate not to say that no one who did not witness it can form an adequate conception of its glory. It seemed as if the whole starry heavens had congregated at one point near the zenith, and were simultaneously shooting forth, with the velocity of lightning, to every part of the horizon; and yet they were not exhausted—thousands swiftly followed in the track of thousands, as if created for the occasion."

In the *Signs of the Times* (Oakland, Cal.) of April 13, 1888, there was a description of the falling stars, by one who witnessed the event, and from it the following statements are taken:—

"While many were excessively frightened at the wonderful display of 'celestial fire-works,' to the great majority it appeared so grand and magnificent as to be truly exhilarating. It was a sight never to be forgotten. It stands as vividly printed on my memory to-day as it did a month after it occurred.

"A number of attempts have been made to illustrate this scene, but it is impossible to give a just idea of it in a picture. It is not possible to give in a picture a representation of the stars falling at all points of the compass at once. But they fell in myriads to the north, east, south, and west. Any representation on paper must at best give a very limited idea of the reality. . . . They emanated from a point far beyond the regions of our atmosphere—so far that to the beholder they did not appear to come from one point." (Professor Olmstead, of Yale College, says that they could not have been less than two thousand two hundred and thirty-eight miles from the earth.) "They pen-

ciled their way down the vault of the heavens, having the same appearance of relative distance that other stars present to the naked eye."

"I viewed the actual scene for hours, and saw millions of stars, but I did not see one shooting star that night. I have seen lone shooting stars, but I never saw three in the heavens at once. I never saw anybody who professed to see a shooting star that night. They presented exactly the appearance given in the description in the prophecy: 'The stars of heaven *fell* unto the earth.' . . . The point from which they emanated was so far beyond our atmosphere, and of course so far beyond the range of vision, that in every locality they appeared to fall straight downward."

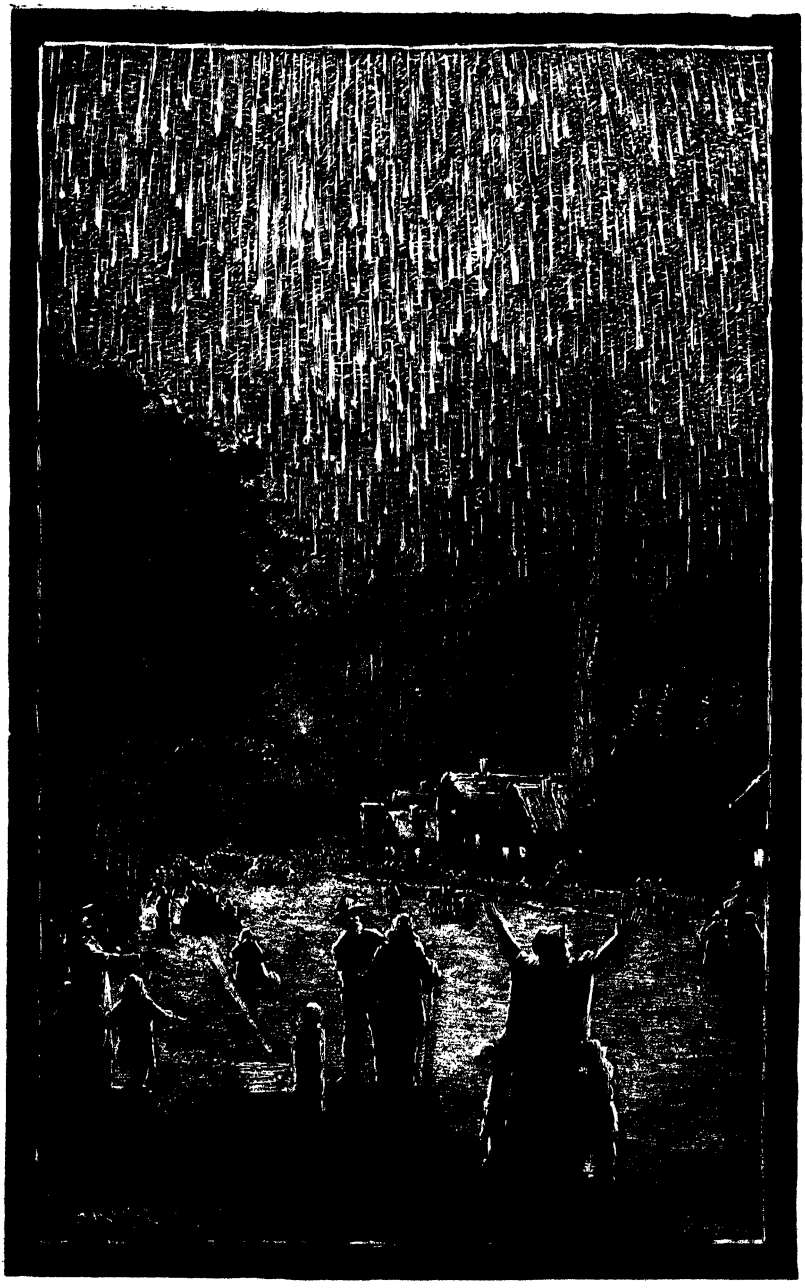
"How long they continued to fall we had no possible means of determining. In the eastern part of Pennsylvania, where I was, they began to fall about eleven o'clock in the evening, increasing in frequency until, in a few hours, they became a perfect shower. They could no more be counted than one can count the fast-falling flakes of snow in a hard storm. They continued to fall without any diminution of numbers until the dawn of day obscured them. And when the approaching light of the sun paled them in the east, they still covered the western sky. And when the spreading light obscured them in every direction, occasionally one of great brilliancy would leave its trace in the west, showing that they were still falling.

"While most of the incidents and scenes of my early years lose their interest and are seldom thought of, this increases in interest with the increase of years. To nothing do I look back with greater delight, and I never think of it without feelings of thankfulness that I was permitted to behold it. Never have I spoken on the subject of the signs without having the Scripture representation of this sign inspire me with hope and courage. It has made the Saviour's predictions a reality in my experience which, it seems to me, nothing but the memory of the sight could. Such a scene of glory I never expect to behold again until the heavens depart as a scroll, and Jesus with his myriads of shining angels appears."

Thus we have the fulfillment of the two great signs of the Lord's coming, which he himself gave in his discourse upon that subject. But how do they show the nearness of that event? The following verses give the answer:—

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it [he] is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Matt. 24:32–34.

There are some things that it is our duty to know. It is our duty to know the laws of the land in which we live. Ignorance of the law does not excuse the violator thereof, because the law is published for the express purpose of giving people a chance to become familiar with its provisions. It is likewise our duty to know God's will, because he



THE FALLING OF THE STARS.

"And the stars shall fall from heaven." Matt. xxiv. 29.

has revealed it to us in plain terms, and by it we shall be judged, whether we have paid any attention to it or not. So it is our duty to know when the coming of the Lord is near, because our Saviour has given us the means whereby we may know, and has commanded us to know, so that we may be prepared for it. Just so surely as the swelling buds in spring indicate the near approach of summer, so surely do the signs in the heavens, the fulfillment of which we have just noted, indicate that our Saviour's second coming, in power and great glory, is near at hand,—so near that he may be said to be on the threshold; and it only needs the parting of the heavens as a scroll, to reveal him in all his kingly majesty.

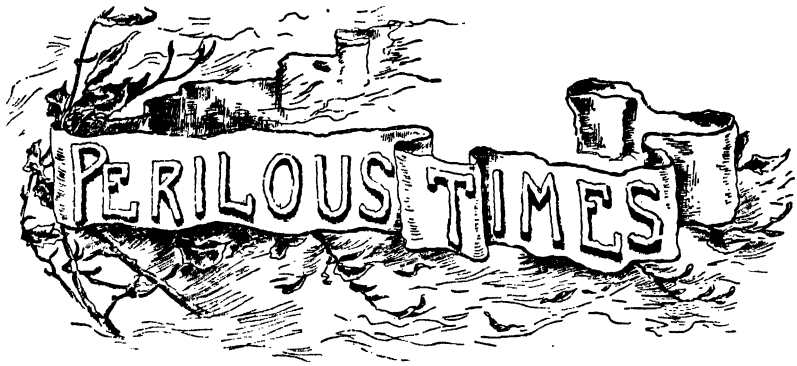
Our Saviour defines what he means by "at the door," by saying, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." What generation? and what things? Why, the generation in which the signs appeared, shall not pass till all the wonders of the second advent shall have been accomplished. It is very evident that by the words "this generation," Jesus did not refer to the generation when he was on earth; for (1) he had expressly shown that his coming would not take place in that generation, and not until after the great period of persecution for the church; and (2) because he had, in a manner common in prophecy, carried himself and his hearers down the stream of time, making them eye-witnesses of each great event, until he had come to the generation when those great signs in the heavens should occur, and stopping there, he said, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." And hen he clinched the words, by saying, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Verse 35.

Yes; "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise." 2 Peter 3:10. "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." Joel 3:16. At the giving of the law upon Sinai, the voice of the Lord shook the earth; "but now hath he promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." Heb. 12:26. This is the shaking of the powers of the heavens, that will occur in immediate connection with the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven. The apostle John thus describes it:—

"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. 6:14–17.

Yet in the midst of all this general desolation,—"the crash of matter and the wreck of worlds,"—"the Lord will be the hope of his people," and, looking up to the opening heavens, where the king in his glory will be revealed, sitting upon the throne of his glory, they will exclaim with rapture, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Isa. 25:9.



We have now noted the distinct signs in the heavens, which our Saviour named in his discourse, to show that his coming is very near. But there are other signs among men, which the close student of prophecy will recognize as showing that the end approaches. Going back to the warning which our Saviour threw in parenthetically when he was locating the signs in the heavens, we read:—

"Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:23–27.

In these words our Saviour briefly describes the work of modern Spiritualism, and tells us how we may avoid being deceived by its attempts to pass its wonders off as the manifestations of the glory of Christ's coming in his kingdom. Of the various manifestations of modern Spirit-

ualism we cannot here speak in detail. Suffice it to say that the wonders of slate-writing and materialization that have already been actually produced by it, aside from the many frauds that have been perpetrated in the name of Spiritualism, are but a sample of what will erelong be exhibited in tenfold greater quantity and degree. The work of Spiritualism, and the agency by which its phenomena are produced, are thus described by the seer of Patmos:—

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Rev. 16:13, 14.

And then the prophet immediately adds the words of Christ, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame," which shows that this working of Satan is an immediate precursor of the coming of the Lord.

Many people suppose that Spiritualist manifestations are nothing but sleight-of-hand tricks. This is a mistake. To be sure, a great deal that passes for Spiritualist phenomena is not Spiritualism at all; but there is also a great deal that is absolutely beyond the power of unaided human beings to accomplish. For instance: In the city of San Francisco, in a brilliantly-lighted hall that was crowded with people, two perfectly clean slates that were provided and inspected by the audience, were fastened together, and hung upon a lighted gas jet in full view of the congregation. The medium kept at a distance from the slates, and no other person was near, and yet the scratch of a pencil was heard between the slates, and in a few minutes the slates were taken down and found to be filled with intelligible messages. Surely this was done by a power beyond the human.

Again: An educated gentleman, a practicing physician, wished advice upon a certain subject. At the advice of a Spiritualist medium, he wrote his question upon a sheet of paper, leaving room below for a reply, and placed it in an envelope, and sealed the envelope. The sealed envelope was placed where nobody but he could have access to it, and when, soon after, he broke the seal, he found in the space below his question an answer, telling him to carry out his proposed plan. Whether the advice was bad or good is not to the point at present. The point is that such things show that there is more than human power behind the manifestations of Spiritualism. Without taking time to show why these manifestations cannot be what is claimed for them—

the work of the spirits of the departed—we rest on the Scripture statement that they are the work of "the spirits of devils."

Now is there any evidence that Spiritualism will attempt to counterfeit the coming of the Lord. There is. In the *World's Advance-Thought* (published at Salem, Oregon), April 5, 1885, the following statements were made in an editorial on "A Coming Messiah:"—

"In a recent Harmony Hall lecture on 'The Messianic Idea,' the necessity for a new Messiah, and the certainty of his early advent, were philosophically considered, as well as *prophetically proclaimed.*

"The Messianic idea is involved in the theory that all the phenomena of spiritual manifestations, however diverse and widely separated, may be referred to a single mediumistic source of distribution. . . . The time has already come for logically arranging the authenticated facts which shall *demonstrate* it.

"There are regular cycles of spiritual progress, of truth unfoldments; and we are now passing from one into another. Another 'Sun of Righteousness' is called for on earth, and *the messenger cannot be far off*, whose life mission it shall be to practically illustrate the new truths that will be vouchsafed."

In the same paper Judge H. A. Maguire is reported as having used the following language in a lecture delivered in that city:—

"I say, 'as one having authority,' Spiritualists, and all, may see a hope, that shall be a realization *to this very generation*, of the higher spiritual forces getting control over and governing all the institutions of the earth. Silently and invisibly to the worldly-wise, these forces have been and are being, under the direction of a divine intelligence, extended into every department and station of human life, and the culmination is near at hand—the ushering in of a *new Messiah*, and a new spiritual dispensation."

More than this, it has been claimed by Spiritualists that they are the only real Adventists—the only ones who are really preparing to welcome the Lord. Now since "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:14), and since he came as such to Jesus at his first advent, and tried to counterfeit and hinder his work in every way possible, what wonder that he should do his best to counterfeit the second coming of Christ, and thus turn the minds of the people away from the real event, so that they will be unprepared for it when it comes. Surely this would be a reasonable supposition, and the Scripture plainly declares that such will actually be the case, and that he will deceive all but the very elect. The Scriptures tell us that in pursuance of his deceptive work, and in order to make good his claim to be the Christ, he will cause fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men. Rev. 13:13.

This work is a sign of the near approach of the day of God. It is Satan's masterpiece of deception. Let people watch the marvelous

growth of Spiritualism, and know that it shows the end to be near. The apostle Paul, speaking of the coming of the Lord to destroy the wicked, says that his coming "is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them [allow to come upon them] strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thess. 2:9–12. It is through Spiritualism that those who reject the truth of God fill up the measure of their iniquity, and thus ripen up for the harvest of the earth.

That this is so, is proved by the following scripture:—

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sin, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth." 2 Tim. 3:1–8.

Jannes and Jambres, Pharaoh's magicians, withstood Moses by performing miracles to offset those which he performed. Deriving their power from the devil, they sought to make Pharaoh and the people believe that their miracles were from the same source as were those of Moses. So modern Spiritualists claim that they are doing the very same things that Jesus did when he was here on earth, and by the same power, and thus they seek to undermine true Christianity. But as Pharaoh's magicians were exposed, so will these be to all who love the truth.

But how will Spiritualism cause those who accept it to fill up the measure of their iniquity, so that God's wrath cannot longer be withheld from them? Just this way: One of the cardinal principles of Spiritualism is that man is a part of God; that every man is his own lawgiver, and his own saviour. They utterly reject Christ and the atonement, and claim that evil is only undeveloped good; that each one must follow the dictates of his own nature. Now when we remember that man has a fallen nature; that "out of the heart of men," that is, out of the nature of men, "proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasci

an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness" (Mark 7:21, 22), and that man has no power in himself to better his own condition, we can see at once that when men give themselves up to follow the impulses of their own nature, they must inevitably descend rapidly to the lowest depths of degradation. Let the reader compare the sins enumerated in 2 Tim. 3:1–5 with the works of the flesh as enumerated in Gal. 5:19–21, and he will see that under Spiritualism men simply do the things which unrestrained human nature must necessarily do. Now read what the Saviour says of the state of morals that will exist when he comes:—

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:37–39.

"Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:28–30.

In the days before the flood, the wickedness of man was great, so much so that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually;" and "all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." Gen. 6:5, 12. This was because the people chose to follow their own impulses, and resisted the strivings of God's Holy Spirit. But human nature is the same in all ages; and when men resist the Spirit of God, and cast off all restraint, as Spiritualism leads them to do, the wickedness of the antediluvians and the Sodomites will be repeated in every detail. In view of this, how appropriate are the words uttered concerning this time, "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments."

The chapter which contains this discourse concerning the time of Christ's coming, very fittingly closes with encouragement and warning. Said Jesus:—

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods." Matt. 24:45–47.

The Christian's duty in this time of "patient waiting for Christ" is to work. The Lord has given talents "to every man according to

his several ability," and it is their business to occupy, *i. e.*, improve them for the Master's profit, until he comes. He has given "to every man his work." And in order that men's faithfulness may be fully tested, he has kept secret the exact time of his return. "Of that day and hour knoweth no man." Therefore we are exhorted, "Take ye heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is." Mark 13:33. Of one thing we can be sure, and that is that the coming of the Lord is near, "even at the doors." This is all that we need to know.

"But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 24: 48–51.

The man who thinks that because it has been a long time since the signs in the heaven were fulfilled, therefore it may be as much longer before the Lord comes, is as foolish as the man a hundred years old would be if he should say that because he has lived thirty years past the age set down as the limit of man's life, therefore he will no doubt live thirty years longer. Reason would say that since he has lived so long past the allotted age, he cannot hope to live much longer. So we say that "this generation" must be well-nigh past. It matters not that there is a great work yet to be done before all the world shall have heard "this gospel of the kingdom." The apostle Paul says that God "will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Rom. 9:28. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years; he has infinite resources at his command, and, if he chooses, he can cause as much to be done in one day as has been done in the last thousand years. Besides, we do not know how widely the warning message may have been already spread. Elijah thought that he was the only one in all Israel who worshiped Jehovah; but the Lord said to him, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." The same thing may be the case now. Without doubt the work will close, and the Lord will come, when the servants of God are still planning for increased work, and the unfaithful are pursuing their own way, thinking that there is plenty of time.

Only the evil servant says, "My Lord delayeth his coming." In his case the wish is father to the thought. He says so because he

wishes it to be so. He may not say so openly, but his actions will reveal the thoughts of his heart. He ceases to work, and as soon as he ceases to work, he begins to smite his fellow-servants. In view of such a possibility at this time, the apostle James says: "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold, the Judge standeth before the door." James 5:9. What a picture! We are all here expecting the Judge soon to come to decide our eternal destiny. The position we occupy when he comes will determine our fate. If we are humbly working, he will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." If we are striving with one another, instead of against sin, he will say, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Even now he is at the door; his foot is upon the threshold, and his hand is upon the latch. Who, realizing this, can harbor resentment in his heart? Suppose the Judge should open the door, and find us in the act of smiting our fellow-servants! Surely this thought is enough to cause us to "live soberly, righteously, and godly."

Time now is closing, yet "the whole world lieth in wickedness." The mass of mankind in all ages have rejected the mercy of God, and so it will be now. But "though the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." Some out of every kindred and people and nation will wash their robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. For such, mansions are preparing, into which "an abundant entrance" will be ministered when the King comes to claim his own. Of such he will not be ashamed; and in the midst of the great congregation he will call them brethren. Poor and despised they may be now, but then they will be exalted to a place at God's right hand. Glorious thought! "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly;" and as we contemplate the glorious rest and peace that he will bring, our longing hearts respond, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise."

IN the Saviour's sermon on the mount there is a prophecy which is familiar to everyone who has read the Bible at all, but which is very seldom thought of as a prophecy. It is this: "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." Matt. 5:5. This prophecy, which is at the same time a blessed promise, is only one link in a chain of promises that will find their fulfillment at the second coming of our Lord. The study of these promises in their connection with one another, serves to throw light on many passages of the Bible that are otherwise obscure, and to bring out in bold relief the Christian's hope.

It should be evident at first thought that the promise that the meek shall inherit the earth, does not refer to the earth in its present condition, and under the present order of things. A meek person is one who is "mild of temper; not easily provoked or irritated; given to forbearance under injuries; soft, gentle, yielding." By a comparison of this definition with the description of charity, in 1 Cor. 13:4, 5, we must conclude that meekness and charity necessarily exist together, or, rather, that meekness is a part of that charity which is "the bond of perfectness," for "charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." This was the character of Christ. "When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously." 1 Peter 2:23. He "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matt. 20:28), and he said of himself, "I am meek and lowly in heart." Matt. 11:29.

Now a person who possesses these qualities is so rarely found as to be peculiar; and in the struggle for place and power in this world he will invariably be left behind. The man who doesn't look out for himself will have a very limited amount of this world's goods; for, as a general thing, he will not find others to look out for him. With rare exceptions, those who have great worldly possessions have acquired them by aggressively pushing their own claims. The most of the wealth of this world is in the hands of men who do not fear God, and who have but little regard for man. The following description of "the prosperity of the wicked" in ancient times, will apply equally well to-day:—

"They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression; they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth. Therefore his people return hither; and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High? Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches." Ps. 73:5–12.

At one time when there was a strife among the disciples of Jesus, as to "which of them should be accounted the greatest," Jesus showed them the difference between those who now possess this world, and those to whom it is promised as a future inheritance, by saying:—

"The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they

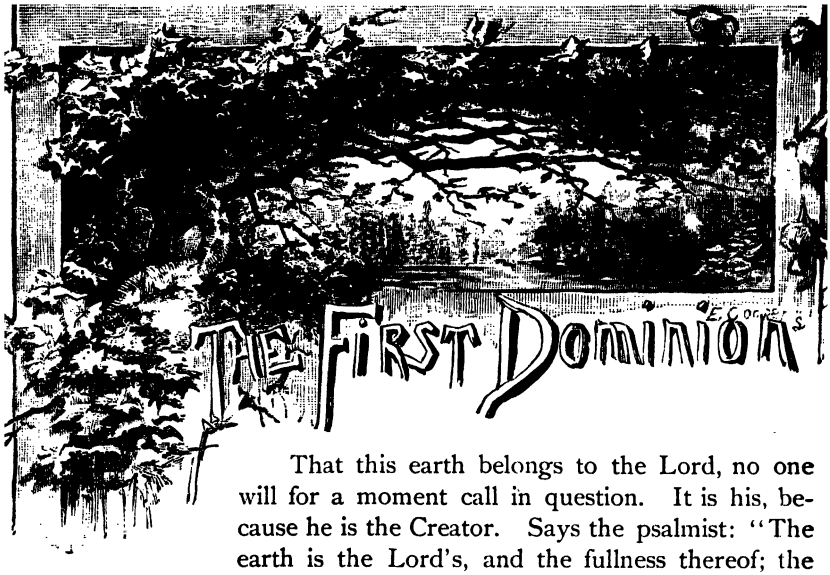
that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. . . . Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Luke 22 : 25–30.

The epistle of James was addressed "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (James 1 : 1), and in that we read: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" And then the apostle adds, "Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment-seats?" James 2 : 5, 6.

From these texts we must conclude that the earth, which is to be inherited by the meek, is the kingdom of which those who are poor in this world's goods, but rich in faith, are heirs. Those who learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart, and who follow him in his life of self-denial, being sharers in his sufferings, may now be oppressed and derided by the haughty who have more than heart can wish; but a time will come when they who hunger now shall be filled, and those who are full now shall hunger; when those who weep now shall laugh, and those who laugh now shall mourn and lament. (See Luke 6 : 20–25.) The psalmist, in the following words, tells when the meek shall inherit the earth: "For evil-doers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Ps. 37 : 9–11.

But those who share this abundance of peace will be Israelites, and none others. For an Israelite indeed is one "in whom is no guile" (John 1 : 47); and none can stand before God except those who are without fault, having no guile. Rev. 14 : 5. Paul also says that "he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Rom. 2 : 29.

Thus the subject is before us in brief outline. We learn that the inheritance is yet future; that the earth is the kingdom which the meek shall inherit; that the saints who shall inherit the earth will be none other than the twelve tribes of Israel; and that they will not enter into the possession of their inheritance until after the wicked have had their day of prosperity, and have been cut off. The details of the promises and their fulfillment will now claim our attention.



That this earth belongs to the Lord, no one will for a moment call in question. It is his, because he is the Creator. Says the psalmist: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." Ps. 24:1, 2. When the prophet Daniel interpreted to King Nebuchadnezzar the dream which foretold his abasement, he told the king that he should be driven out from his kingdom, "till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." Dan. 4:25. And in Ps. 115:16 we read: "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's; but the earth hath he given to the children of men." This means simply that Heaven is God's dwelling-place (Ps. 11:4), and that over it he has sole control, but that he has made man the tenant of the earth. When and how the dominion of the earth was given to man are told in the following verses:—

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Gen. 1:26–28.

A dominion is a kingdom; to have dominion is to have kingly authority. Therefore since the earth was given to man for a dominion,

the earth was designed for man's kingdom. To this intent David speaks in the eighth psalm, where he says of man: "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." Ps. 8:5–8. The apostle quotes this (Heb. 2:7, 8), and makes the additional statement that "now we see not yet all things put under him." This being the case, it must be because man has lost the dominion, for it was certainly given to him. In these words of the apostle, therefore, we have at once a statement of the loss of the dominion first given to man, and a promise of its restoration.

The details of the loss of the dominion which at the first was given to man are given in the third chapter of Genesis. In the first part of the chapter we learn that the serpent beguiled Eve, and persuaded her to eat of the forbidden fruit, and that she in turn induced Adam to eat. Then God said to Adam: "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3:17–19. And afterwards when Cain had killed his brother, the Lord said: "When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength." Gen. 4:12. From this we learn that it is because of man's disobedience that we do not now see all things put under him.

But when man lost the dominion of the earth, who gained it? Evidently the one to whom he yielded obedience. Peter says that "of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." 2 Pet. 2:19. And Jesus said: "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." Luke 11:21, 22. Our first parents were overcome by the serpent, "which is the devil, and Satan" (Rev. 20:2), and therefore it was to Satan that they yielded up the dominion which had been committed to them.

That Satan is now the ruler of this earth, instead of man, is shown by many scriptures. In 2 Cor. 4:4 Satan is spoken of as "the god of this world." Christ said that the wicked are children of Satan (John

8:44); and in Eph. 2:2, "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" is called "the prince of the power of the air." Satan is "the accuser of the brethren," the one whom the followers of Christ are to "resist steadfast in the faith" (1 Pet. 5:8, 9); and Paul says that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world." Eph. 6:12. And none can doubt that it was to Satan that Christ referred, when he said: "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." John 14:30.

In the account of our Lord's temptation in the wilderness, we have the most positive evidence that Satan holds the dominion that was given to Adam. The last and greatest temptation is thus described:—

"Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Matt. 4:8, 9.

Some may think that Satan lied when he made this promise to Christ, and that he knew that he did not have the power to fulfill the promise, even if he could have induced the Lord to comply with the conditions. There is no doubt but that Satan lied when he said that he would give all the kingdoms of the world to Christ, and that he had no intention of yielding up anything that he had; but if he did not possess the kingdoms of the earth, Christ certainly knew it, and in that case the offer of them to him would not have been any temptation. When Satan said to Jesus, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread," there was a real temptation, because Jesus was extremely hungry. When Satan placed Jesus on a pinnacle of the temple, and said, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down," there was a temptation to show his divine power. And so when Satan showed to Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, offering to give them to him in return for his homage, there was a temptation, because Satan was offering that which Christ came into the world to redeem. Jesus did not tell Satan that he had no right to offer to him the kingdoms of this world, but simply refused to accept them upon the conditions imposed, thus tacitly admitting that Satan was "the prince of this world."

In Eze. 28:12–17 we have an unmistakable reference to Satan. No other being could merit the following description: "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, the topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold. . . .

Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. . . . Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." That is a description of Satan before his fall, and also a statement of the reason of his fall. But let the reader take particular notice that the being thus described is called "the king of Tyrus." Verse 12. The wisdom and power of the man who sat upon the throne of Tyre are described in verses 2–11 of this same chapter (Ezekiel 28), and he is called the "*prince* of Tyrus." In this we have further inspired testimony to the fact that Satan is "god of this world," working in the children of disobedience. Wicked rulers, like the king of Tyre, are only nominally kings; they are second in power to Satan, who rules through them, and is thus real king. But while Satan has usurped the dominion which God gave to Adam, he does not have unlimited control of this earth. God did not give unlimited and supreme authority over the earth even to man in his uprightness; and so when Satan overcame man, it was not possible for him to get control of the earth to an unlimited degree. This fact Satan acknowledged, when he said to the Lord concerning Job: "Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?" Job 1 : 10. It still remains true that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."

It was stated, in connection with the reference to the temptation of Jesus, that Satan offered him that which he came into the world to redeem,—the dominion of the earth, which Adam lost. This will presently be made to appear. When Adam lost the dominion, he also lost his right to live; he forfeited his life to Satan at the same time that he forfeited the earth to him. So it is that Satan is "god of this world," and has also "the power of death." Heb. 2 : 14. Now Christ came to redeem what Adam lost. And so when the apostle quotes the words of the psalmist, when he says that God set man over the works of his hands, but that "now we see not yet all things put under him," he adds: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage." Heb. 2 : 9, 14, 15.

In order that Christ might redeem men from the curse of death, which came upon him when he yielded to Satan, he had to suffer the same curse. Says Paul: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." Gal. 3:13. And so, to redeem the earth, he bore its curse, when the crown of thorns was placed upon his head. Compare Gen. 3:17, 18 and Matt. 27:29. As Christ has, by death, gained the right to destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, he has also won the right to the dominion which Satan usurped. And so the prophet addresses Christ in the following language:—

"And thou, O Tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even *the first dominion;* the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem." Micah 4:8.

In these words we have the promise of the restoration of the first dominion (see Gen. 1:28), not to Adam, who lost it, but to Christ, the second Adam, who redeemed it. Those who through faith recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who learn of Jesus to be meek and lowly in heart, will inherit the earth with Christ, when he shall take possession of it as his kingdom.

Having learned that this earth was designed to be Adam's kingdom, and that he forfeited it, and that Christ has bought the title to it, and will one day call his own to share it with him, we shall now trace the chain of evidence from paradise lost to paradise restored.

When God pronounced the curse upon our first parents, and upon the earth, he also made known the way of escape from that curse. Christ, the deliverer, was immediately promised. To Satan the Lord said: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Gen. 3:15. These words contain the promise of the Messiah, who, although he should be allowed to be bruised by Satan, should thereby gain the right to destroy Satan and all his works.

Time passed, and Satan seemed to get a still firmer hold upon the earth, for "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." Gen. 6:5, 12. In all the earth there was but one family who acknowledged and served God; all the rest of mankind were totally given up to the service of the devil. "And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." Gen. 6:13.

So the earth, with all its inhabitants, was destroyed by the flood. Noah and his family alone were saved; and when they came out of the ark, God said to them, as he had said to Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Gen. 9:1. He did not, as to our first parents, give them dominion over all the earth, for that was impossible; but in order that men might not be exterminated by the beasts, that had become savage by passing under the dominion of Satan, he said: "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered." Gen. 9:2. Thus did God interpose to limit Satan's power, giving men a chance for life, that they might prepare for the complete possession of the earth when it should be restored.

But as men began again to multiply upon the earth, they again forsook the Lord, and gave themselves fully over to the service of Satan. Soon after the flood, we find them so filled with rebellious pride that they began to build a city and a tower, thinking that thereby they could protect themselves against any judgments that God might bring upon them. Gen. 11:1–9. This impious attempt was brought to nothing, and the people were scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth, yet they did not forsake the service of Satan. Within about four hundred years after the flood, the people of the earth were once more sunken in idolatry and superstition.

At that time the Lord came to Abraham, one of the descendants of Shem, and said to him:—

"Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Gen. 12:1–3.

The Lord saw in Abraham a willingness to serve him, although all his people were idolaters (Josh. 24:2), and he separated him from them, so that he might not become contaminated by them, but might become the father of a people who should be fit to inherit the earth. If we closely examine this promise, we shall find that it comprehends a great deal. "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," means nothing less than the possession of the whole earth by the descendants of Abraham. But this will appear more clearly as we pass on. In Gen. 13:14–17 we find the promise renewed more in detail, in these words:—

"And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."

Here we have strong proof that the promise to Abraham included nothing less than the whole earth, for his seed were to be multiplied as the dust of the earth. The length and the breadth of the land was to be theirs.

At that time Abraham had no child, and in all human probability could never have one. "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee." Gen. 17:1–5.

Again, when God was about to destroy Sodom, he said:—

"Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that

Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Gen. 18:17–19.

This gives us to understand that the promise was made to Abraham with so much positiveness, because the Lord knew that he would keep his commandments, and that he would command his children and his household after him to do likewise. From this also we may learn that the promise to his seed was only to those who should serve the Lord.

Once more we find the promise renewed when Abraham had showed his faith in God by proceeding to offer up his only son, through whom the promise was to be fulfilled. The Lord then called to Abraham and said:—

"By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." Gen. 22:16–18.

In the expression, "thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies," we have the promise of conquest. Bear this in mind, while we consider a few other points. In Gal. 3:13–17 we have a scripture that has an intimate connection with the subject under consideration. It reads thus:—

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; . . . that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, which was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law . . . . cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."

From the above scripture we learn that the seed to whom the promise was made is Christ,—the same that was promised at the time of the fall. Now in connection with the promise to Abraham, that his seed should possess the gate of his enemies, read the following words of God the Father to his Son Jesus Christ:—

"Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Ps. 2:7–9.

When this shall have been accomplished, then "the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." For the meek are they who have come to Christ and have learned of him, yielding themselves to him to be his servants; and Paul says: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29. From this, together with the statement that "they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham, and the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed" (Gal. 3:7, 8), we may conclude, even at this stage of our study, that the promise to Abraham, and to his seed, was nothing less than the promise of the earth to all who, through faith in Christ, should gain the victory over sin. And this is further confirmed by Paul's statement that "the promise, that he should be *the heir of the world*, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Rom. 4:13. But we shall come to this point again, as we proceed in this investigation.

In the twenty-sixth chapter of Genesis we find the promise once more repeated, this time to Isaac. Abraham was dead, and there was a famine in the land, and the Lord appeared to Isaac, and said:—

"Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of; sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." Verses 2–5.

Notice here that God made the very same promise to Isaac that he had made to Abraham; and he also said that he would perform the oath that he sware unto Abraham. He gave no hint of any delay having occurred in the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham, but spoke of it as something that he would do just as he had promised. Yet Abraham was at that time dead. Therefore we must conclude that the Lord never designed to fulfill the promise in Abraham's life-

time; and we shall find that Abraham did not expect that it would be then fulfilled.

Passing on, we come to the time when Jacob had his dream of the ladder which reached from earth to heaven, upon which the angels of God were ascending and descending. "And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen. 28:13, 14.

Now it is certain that neither Abraham, Isaac, nor Jacob, ever had any share in the inheritance promised to them. When Stephen was before the Jewish Sanhedrim, on trial for his life, he referred to God's call for Abraham to go into the land of Canaan, and said, "*And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on;* yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." Acts 7:5. And this Stephen used as a part of his argument that the promise to Israel was yet to be fulfilled. As proof of Stephen's statement that Abraham had no inheritance in the land, we cite the fact that when Sarah his wife died he had to buy a place in which to bury her, yet the Lord

had promised to give it all to him. But notwithstanding this seeming failure, we shall find that the Lord is not slack concerning his promise.

Not only did Abraham have no inheritance in the land, but Isaac and Jacob were in like condition. The apostle says:—

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Heb. 11:8–10.

And then, after telling how through faith Abraham had a numerous posterity, the apostle continues:—

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." Heb. 11:13–16.

They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth, which had been promised to them for an inheritance; they died without having received the promised inheritance, or any part of it; yet their faith was as strong when they died as when the promise was first made. Therefore we know beyond all question that none of the patriarchs expected that the inheritance would be given to them in their life-time. They plainly declared, says Paul, that they looked for a country, and we have already learned that that country was the whole earth; and since they were not disappointed because the country was not given to them in their life-time, it is evident that they understood the promise to embrace the resurrection from the dead. This was plainly declared to be the case, by Paul, when he testified of his faith before Agrippa. Said he:—

"And now I stand and am judged *for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers;* unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Acts 26:6–8.

All who have read the book of Acts know that Paul was persecuted

by the Jews because he preached Christ. This was the cause of all the Jewish persecution of Christians. After Peter and John had healed the lame man, at the gate of the temple, and had declared to the Jews that it was done through the power of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified and who was risen from the dead, "the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead." Acts 4:1, 2. This was the burden of all the apostles' preaching, and the reason why they were persecuted. Paul said that in Corinth he knew nothing else but "Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2), and we may be sure he did not preach a different gospel to the Corinthians from what he did to other people. Indeed, at the time when Paul stood before Agrippa, and uttered the words quoted in the preceding paragraph, he said that he had continued unto that day, "saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come; that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." Acts 26:22, 23.

The apostles were persecuted by the Jews for preaching what the Jews themselves professed to believe. The Jews professed to believe the writings of Moses and the prophets, and the apostles preached nothing else. When he was accused by the Jews, before Felix, he said:—

"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets; and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Acts 24:14, 15.

It is probably a fact that in nearly every instance where men have been persecuted as heretics, the heresy of which they were accused was some doctrine which their accusers would have been obliged to hold if they had been consistent with their profession. In the great majority of cases the "heretics" in the church have been men who have obeyed and taught the truth of the Bible; and their persecutors have been those who, by their preaching, were convicted of inconsistency. Luther expected, and had a right to expect, that the church would uphold him in his protest against indulgences; but, instead, it persecuted him. So the Jews held the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, but they persecuted Paul for preaching it, because it involved the preaching of Christ, whom their pride led them to reject.

Now put these facts with Paul's statement that he stood and was judged for the hope of the promise made of God to the fathers, and it is

as plain as language can make it that the promise to the fathers was that through Christ they should have a resurrection from the dead, and should by that means enter upon their inheritance. Paul looked forward to the fulfillment of the promise with as ardent hope and as steadfast faith as did Abraham, and it was this that he had in mind when he said that, "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:12, 13.

This has been the hope of the church in all ages. In the midst of his deep affliction, the patriarch Job found comfort in the knowledge that his Redeemer lived and should stand in the latter day upon the earth, and that although worms might devour his body, nevertheless in his flesh he should see God. Job 19:23–27. Again, after speaking of the certainty of death and decay, he asked, "If a man die, shall he live again?" and at once answered his own question, saying, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee; thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." Job 14:14, 15. What this change will be, and when it will take place, we are told by the apostle Paul in the following language:—

"Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Cor. 15:51–55.

Isaiah also, after speaking of the desolation of Israel, said: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isa. 26:19. And this will take place at the time spoken of in the following verses, from which Paul quoted when he showed to the Corinthians the mystery of the resurrection from the dead:—

"And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of

his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Isa. 25:6–9.

We return once more to Abraham, and the promise to him and his seed. We have learned that the promise was confirmed to him in Christ; and certainly this was the case when a son was promised to him, for the record says, "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." Gen. 15:6. This counting his faith for righteousness was nothing else but the forgiveness of his sins, through Christ. This is plainly declared to be the case in Rom. 4:3–9. Now at the very time when the promise was thus confirmed to him, the Lord said to him: "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterwards shall they come out with great substance." Gen. 15:13, 14.

In this text we have the sojourn in Egypt foretold; but we have more than that, for the children of Israel were not in Egypt four hundred years. It was only four hundred and thirty years from the time that the promise was made to Abraham until the giving of the law, immediately after the departure from Egypt. Gal. 3:17. We can easily make up this time thus: From the time that the promise was made till the birth of Isaac was twenty-five years. Compare Gen. 12:1–4 and Gen. 21:5. From the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob was

sixty years. Gen. 25:26. From the birth of Jacob till the going down into Egypt, was one hundred and thirty years. Gen. 47:8, 9. Therefore from the promise to Abraham until the going down into Egypt was (25+60+130=)215 years. And Josephus says (Antiquities, book 2, chap. 15, paragraph 2) that the length of the sojourn in Egypt was two hundred and fifteen years, thus making the four hundred and thirty years of Gal. 3:17.

But how about the four hundred years of affliction which the Lord said that the posterity of Abraham should suffer? It is evident from the text, and also from Acts 7:6, 7, that the four hundred years ended at the exode, the same time when the four hundred and thirty years ended. Then they must have begun thirty years after the promise was first made to Abraham, or when Isaac was about five years old. Now in Gal. 4:29 Paul says that "he that was born after the flesh," namely Ishmael, persecuted Isaac, who was "born after the Spirit;" and this cannot refer to any other time than that when Ishmael "mocked" Isaac, which resulted in the expulsion of Ishmael and his mother. Gen. 21:9, 10. This is the only recorded instance of the persecution of Isaac by Ishmael, and was, as nearly as can be calculated, about thirty years after the promise, and four hundred years before the deliverance from Egypt. So there were one hundred and eighty-five of the four hundred years' affliction that were endured in the land of Canaan, and in adjoining countries. Yet all this time they were sojourning in a country that was not theirs. (Compare Gen. 15:13 and Heb. 11:9.)

We pass over the bondage in Egypt, and come to the time of the exode. When Moses was sent down into Egypt to deliver the people, the Lord gave him the following message:—

"Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments; and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage; I am the Lord." Ex. 6:6–8.

Here the promise to Abraham, which was renewed to Isaac and to Jacob, was renewed again to their descendants. And in pursuance of that same promise, the Lord said to them when they had gone out of Egypt:—

"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bear you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now there-

fore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." Ex. 19:4–6.

Now that this was the same promise that was made to Abraham, we have an explicit statement, in the following words, found in Deut. 7:6–8:—

"Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you, and *because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers*, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."

When we read the promise recorded in Gen. 22:17 we noted that in the words, "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies," it included rest from oppression. So likewise the promise to the Israelites included not only possession of land, but rest. Thus when Moses allowed two tribes and a half to settle in the country across the Jordan, he said to them:—

"The Lord your God hath given you this land to possess it; ye shall pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, all that are meet for the war . . . until the Lord have given rest unto your brethren, as well as unto you, and until they also possess the land which the Lord your God hath given them beyond Jordan." Deut. 3:18–20.

Again, just a little while before they reached the land of Canaan, Moses said to them:—

"For ye are not as yet come *to the rest* and *to the inheritance*, which the Lord your God giveth you. But when ye go over Jordan, and *dwell in the land* which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit, and when *he giveth you rest* from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety; then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there," etc. Deut. 12:9–11.

Thus we find that *rest from their enemies* was as much a part of the promise as was the inheritance of the land.

Joshua was the one to lead the people over Jordan into the land of promise; and the record expressly states that before he died the land was divided among the people, "and the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers; and there stood

not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand." Josh. 21:44.

Yet in the face of this record, the apostle declares that Joshua did not give them rest. For some reason, we know not what, the translators of the common version sometimes gave an incorrect translation in the body of the text, and placed the correct rendering in the margin. So it is in Heb. 4:8. We quote the correct marginal reading: "For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day." The "another day" of this text is the "to-day" of Ps. 95:7–11, where the Lord said, through his servant:—

"To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways; unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest."

Now although a very few of those who came out from Egypt did enter into the land of Canaan, and the Lord gave them rest, it is certain that that was not the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, because (1) Abraham had no part in it (Acts 7:5), neither did Isaac and Jacob, to whom the promise was made, as well as to Abraham; and (2) the apostle speaks of "Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets" (Heb. 11:32), all of whom lived after the days of Joshua; and of them he says:—

"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith; received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11:39, 40.

Here we learn that the promise will not be fulfilled to them until we share it with them; and so the apostle says: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Heb. 4:9. At the same time, however, he utters a word of caution, saying: "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Heb. 4:1, 2.

From this we learn that the promise of rest was made known to the ancient Jews through the preaching of the gospel. We have already read the statement of Paul, that the gospel was preached to Abraham, in the promise, "In thee shall all nations be blest," and that only those that had faith in the gospel are the children of Abraham. Gal. 3:7, 8. But the Jews, as a nation, did not have faith, and so they were debarred from the real rest which the Lord promised to

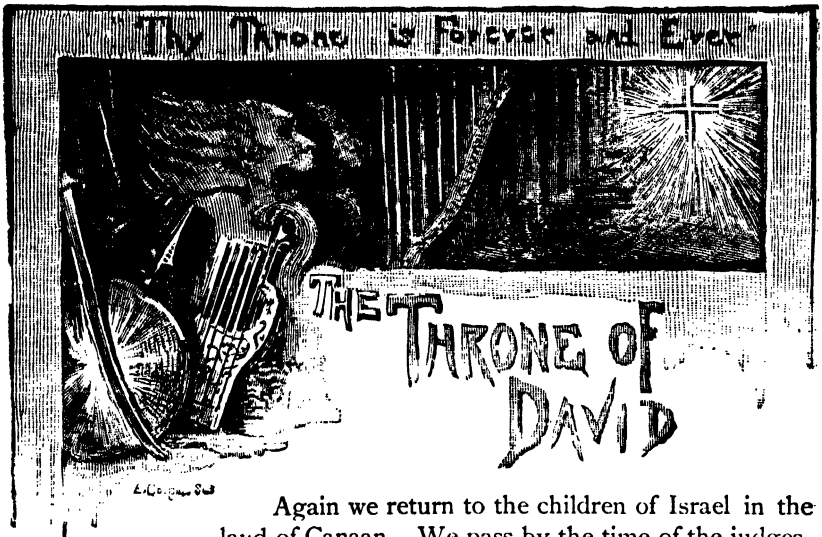
Abraham. The same promise is left to us, but we, like them, shall come short of it, unless we have the faith of Abraham.

That the rest here referred to is the rest in the earth when it shall be freed from the curse, is manifest from verses 3–8 of Hebrews 4. The apostle says:—

"For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter [that is, "they shall not enter"] into my rest; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest."

The apostle is not making any argument here concerning the Sabbath. He simply refers to the record in Gen. 2:3, in proof of his statement that "the works were finished from the foundation of the world." The earth was designed to be inhabited by man. Isa. 45:18. The dominion of the earth, as it came pure and undefiled from the hand of the Creator, was given to man. Gen. 1:28. And so, on the seventh day, when God rested from all his works, the rest was prepared for his people. That rest, which was simply the possession of the whole earth as a kingdom, was lost through transgression; yet it is certain that some must enter in (Heb. 4:6); and so a "day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2) is granted. This is the day that is spoken of in Ps. 95:7, the day secured to us through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, as spoken of in Ps. 118:19–24; the day which Abraham saw, and which caused him to rejoice. John 8:56. In this day of grace all who will may become enrolled as children of Abraham, through faith, becoming "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;" and to them the Lord will say when he comes sitting upon the throne of his glory, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you *from the foundation* of the world." Matt. 25:34. Compare Heb. 4:3 and the comments already made upon it.

Thus we learn "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance;" and that "the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation." 2 Peter 3:9, 15. But though the Lord is long-suffering, he will not always delay judgment. Of the antediluvians he said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." For one hundred and twenty years his Spirit was seeking to draw them away from sin; and not until it was useless to strive longer did God withdraw his Spirit. His grace that was bestowed upon them proved to be in vain, because the delay in the execution of the sentence upon their evil works, only made them the more determined to do evil. Let us learn a lesson from their fate, and seek the Lord while he may be found.



Again we return to the children of Israel in the land of Canaan. We pass by the time of the judges, of their apostasies and consequent afflictions, and come to the time when the kingdom had been established and given to David. The record says that "when the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies" (2 Sam. 7 : 1), the king proposed to build a house for the Lord. The prophet Nathan approved of his project, but afterwards, at the command of the Lord, he told him that he should not build the house. After briefly rehearsing his dealings with the children of Israel, the Lord said:—

"Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime." 2 Sam. 7 : 10.

Note this text carefully. When these words were spoken to David, the children of Israel had been in the land of Canaan four hundred years, and at that very time David, as king of all Israel, was in quiet possession of the land, for "the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies;" and yet, ignoring all this, the Lord promised to plant his people in a land of *their own*, and to give them rest from their enemies. What could the Lord have meant by that? Simply this, that the possession of the small territory of the land of Canaan was not the rest that God designed for his people. Not yet had the promise to Abraham been fulfilled, and the Lord had not forgotten it.

At this time the Lord identified David with the promise, almost as closely as was Abraham. The Lord said to him:—

"And thine house and *thy kingdom shall be established forever*

before thee; thy throne shall be established forever." 2 Sam. 7 : 16.

And in praising God for the largeness of his promise, David said:—

"Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. . . . Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God; for there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people *Israel to be a people unto thee forever;* and thou, Lord, art become their God." 2 Sam. 7 : 18–24.

Starting with this specific promise that David's kingdom should be established forever, and that Israel should be a people forever, we shall very briefly trace the history of that kingdom. We find that it continued prosperous and undivided only through the remainder of his reign, and through the reign of his son Solomon. When Solomon died, his son Rehoboam succeeded to the throne. 1 Kings 11 : 43. No sooner was Rehoboam seated upon the throne, than the people came to him to learn what would be the policy of his reign, and asking that he would lighten the burdens imposed on them by his father. Following the counsel of the young men, Rehoboam replied: "My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke; my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." 1 Kings 12 : 14.

"So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse; to your tents, O Israel; now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. . . . So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day. And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel; there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only." Verses 16–20.

This division of the kingdom was effected in the year 975 B. C. It was in fulfillment of a prophecy made to Jeroboam by Ahijah, which is recorded in the eleventh chapter of 1 Kings. The reason why the

greater part of the kingdom was to be taken away from the house of Solomon, was thus stated by the prophet:—

"Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee (but he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel); because that they have forsaken me, and have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father." Verses 31–33.

Thus the kingdom, with the exception of one tribe, was taken from the house of David, on account of Solomon's terrible idolatry; and to Jeroboam the Lord said:—

"And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that which is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee." Verses 37, 38.

But Jeroboam did not heed the words of the Lord. As soon as he came to the throne, he made two calves for the people to worship, so as to keep them from going to Jerusalem to worship the Lord (1 Kings 12 : 26–30); and although he was reproved by the prophet of the Lord, he "returned not from his evil way," but "made Israel to sin," for which reason the Lord cut him off. Read 1 Kings 13 and 14.

The succeeding kings were no better; for among all the kings of Israel we find not one good man. They were all idolaters, and some of them were men of the vilest character, without a single redeeming trait. The children of Israel sinned against the Lord "and walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel. . . . And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree; and there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the Lord carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger. . . . And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger." 2 Kings 17 : 7–23.

So in the year 721 B. C., after the kingdom of Israel had continued

two hundred and fifty-four years, and had made a record of wickedness which has probably never been exceeded by any nation, the Lord removed them "out of his sight." In that year the king of Assyria took Samaria, the capital of the kingdom, "and carried Israel away into Assyria," and filled their places with "men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim." 2 Kings 17:6, 24. From this date the kingdom of Israel has no more a place in history.

The history of the kingdom of Judah was somewhat different. Some of the kings were as wicked as any of the kings of Israel, and some of them were men of eminent piety. There was a succession of apostasies, of judgments, and of repentance and apostasy. Toward the close of its history the prophet Jeremiah said:—

"Thus said the Lord unto me: Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people, whereby the kings of Judah come in, and by the which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem; and say unto them, Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these gates; thus saith the Lord: Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath-day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath-day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath-day, as I commanded your fathers. (But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their necks stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction.) And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath-day, but hallow the Sabbath-day, to do no work therein; then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall remain forever." Jer. 17:19–25.

A few remarks concerning God's purpose with Israel may be in place here. He chose Abraham, because Abraham had a heart to serve him, and would keep the light of God's truth from dying out. He called the Israelites out from Egypt, so that they might serve him; and he made them the depositaries of his holy law, in order that they might hold up the standard of truth to the surrounding nations. In numerous places we learn that provision was made that the strangers who wished to serve the Lord could become a part of Israel, and heirs of the promise equally with the descendants of Abraham. If the children of Israel had been true to their high calling, and had not departed from God, or, having departed and repented, had remained faithful, they would ever

have continued as a nation. And the text that we have just read indicates that in that case Jerusalem itself would have stood forever as the capital of the kingdom. What transformation it would have undergone, to make it suitable for the eternal habitation of the saints, we cannot tell. On the other hand, the following judgment, if they should depart from God, was uttered by Jeremiah:—

"But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath-day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." Jer. 17:27.

These warnings were not heeded. In the twenty-fifth chapter of Jeremiah we find the announcement of their captivity, because of their refusal to obey God. And the twenty-seventh chapter contains the record that the Lord told the king of Judah, and the kings of the surrounding nations, that he had given their lands to the king of Babylon, and that they should submit to him. Jeremiah was commanded to say to the messengers of the kings:—

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Thus shall ye say unto your masters: I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son; until the very time of his land come; and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him." Jer. 27:4–7.

This was in the reign of Zedekiah, after Nebuchadnezzar had besieged Jerusalem once, and had taken part of the people captive. But Zedekiah would not obey the Lord, neither would he submit to the punishment which the Lord put upon him through Nebuchadnezzar. The record says: "And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord. And he also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God; but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord God of Israel." 2 Chron. 36:12, 13.

The record continues:—

"Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes,

and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place; but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, *till there was no remedy.* Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age. . . . And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof, . . . to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah." Verses 14–21.

This was the complete overthrow of the kingdom of Judah. Although, after seventy years of captivity, all who wished were given full liberty to return to Jerusalem, and the city and the temple were rebuilt, no king since that time has ever sat upon the throne of Israel. The Jews were in Babylon till that empire was overthrown by the Medes and Persians, B. C. 538. Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia, gave them permission to return to their own land, but they had no king, and they existed only through the sufferance of the kings of Persia. Alexander the Great showed them favors, and to him they acknowledged allegiance. When the empire of Greece was divided at the death of Alexander, they were subject by turns to different kings, until finally they turned to the rising power of Rome for complete protection, and remained subject to Rome as long as they had any existence as a nation. But before we speak of their final fate, we must look at a prophecy concerning the kingdom, which was uttered by Ezekiel toward the last of Zedekiah's reign. After foretelling the invasion by the king of Babylon, the prophet said:—

"And thou, profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God: Remove the diadem, and take off the crown; this shall not be the same; exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him." Eze. 21:25–27.

In this prophecy the history of the world from then until the end of time is briefly told. When the diadem was removed from the head of Zedekiah, the kingdom passed into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Not simply the narrow limits of the kingdom over which Zedekiah ruled, but all the kingdoms of the earth, or, rather, the dominion of the whole earth, was given to Nebuchadnezzar. (See Jer. 27:4–7; Dan. 2:37, 38.) Then, said the Lord, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it." Three kings reigned in Babylon after Nebuchad-

nezzar, and then the first overturning took place, and the empire of the world passed into the hands of the Medes and the Persians. (See Ezra 1:2.) This took place B. C. 538. The Persian Empire, for the Median portion was overshadowed by the Persian element, lasted for 207 years, until B. C. 331. Then the second overturning took place, and the empire of Greece had the universal control in the earth. (See Dan. 2:39.) After the death of Alexander, the empire was divided into four parts, each striving for supreme control; but by the year 168 B. C. the third overturning had taken place, and the world came under the dominion of the Romans. This was to be the last overturning, said the prophet, "until He come whose right it is," when it shall be given to Him. The one whose the earth is by right is Christ, for the Father has said to him: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee . . . the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Ps. 2:8. Moreover, Christ has purchased the possession, by bearing the curse which came upon it in consequence of Satan's maliciousness, and which constituted the evil one's only claim to it. Thus he bought Satan's technical and usurped claim, and became sole heir of the whole world.

But the promise to give the dominion to Christ did not have reference to his first advent, as will appear from the following:—

1. At the first advent of Christ the Romans ruled the whole world (Luke 2:1); and their empire continued powerful and undivided for nearly four hundred years afterward. Although the Jews rejected Jesus, they had not the power to put him to death, and he was formally condemned and executed by the Romans.

2. Just before his crucifixion Jesus wept over Jerusalem, saying:—

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. 23:37–39.

The rejection of the Messiah filled up the cup of the iniquity of the Jewish nation. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." John 1:11. If they had accepted him they might, even at that late day, and after so many apostasies, have still remained the chosen people of God, through whom the nations of the world should be enlightened, and around whose standard all the faithful would flock. But they rejected the last offer of mercy. As Jesus thought of what they might have been if they had received him, he wept, saying:—

"If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the

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'And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazingstock." Nahum iii. 6.

things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." Luke 19:42.

Never again would the tribes go up to Mount Zion, the joy of the whole earth; no longer should the gorgeous temple be called a house of prayer for all nations. The day of Israel was past, and soon their city would be destroyed, because they knew not the time of their visitation. When Christ uttered that last cry upon the cross, "It is finished," the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, showing that their house was left unto them desolate. Less than forty years later (A. D. 70) the Romans besieged Jerusalem and utterly destroyed it, fulfilling the words of Christ recorded in Matt. 24:2, and Luke 19:43, 44. This destruction, which marked the utter extinction of the Jewish people as a nation, also prefigured the final destruction of all that reject the gospel. From this point we leave the lineal descendants of Abraham.

But God had not forgotten his promise. Centuries before he had said to David that his throne should be established, and the people of Israel should continue, forever; and this promise he could not break. Said he:—

"My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." Ps. 89:34–37.

Later still, Isaiah had made the prophetic statement that,—

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isa. 9:6, 7.

Here, as in the promise made to Abraham, we find that Christ is the seed. It is through Christ that David's kingdom is to be established forever, and so when the angel Gabriel came to Mary to announce the birth of Jesus, he said:—

"Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:31–33.

David understood that the promise concerning the establishment

of his kingdom was to be fulfilled in this manner. On the day of Pentecost, Peter quoted the words of David in the sixteenth psalm: "Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope; because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption," and then said:—

"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell [the grave], neither his flesh did see corruption." Acts 2:29–31.

It was this assurance that caused David, like the other patriarchs, to die in full faith that the promise would be fulfilled.

Christ knew full well that the house of Jacob and the throne of David should endure forever, even while he was foretelling the utter destruction of the Jewish nation. When he stood before Pilate he acknowledged that he was a king, but indicated that the time had not yet come for him to manifest kingly power, by saying, "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." John 18:36.

After his resurrection, as he was about to ascend to the Father, his disciples asked him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." Acts 1:6, 7. Immediately afterward he ascended to Heaven, to sit down at the right hand of God. Why he went there, and what he is doing there, will be briefly indicated by a few scriptures. Through the prophet John he said:—

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Rev. 3:21.

So he has not yet received his kingdom, but sits upon his Father's throne, which is a throne of grace (Heb. 4:14–16), procuring pardon and salvation for all who come unto God by him. It was this work that the prophet Zechariah foretold in these words:—

"Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the tem-

ple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Zech. 6:12, 13.

Since Christ sits upon a throne of grace, the kingdom in which he now rules must be a kingdom of grace. This is an entirely different kingdom from the kingdom of glory, and is designed to fit subjects for that kingdom. It is this kingdom of grace that is referred to in the following texts:—

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Col. 1:12–14.

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. 14:17.

It is a kingdom in which the Spirit of God is bestowed; for Christ said, "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." Matt. 12:28.

The Spirit performs its work silently, as Jesus said: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." John 3:8. And so Jesus said of the kingdom of grace, when the Pharisees demanded when the kingdom of God should come: "The kingdom of God cometh not with outward show; neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is among you." Luke 17:20, 21, marginal reading. By the coming of the kingdom of God, the Pharisees meant the coming of the Messiah, and he was already among them, "full of grace and truth."

So it was this same kingdom that John was in when he said: "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 1:9.

Those who are in the kingdom of grace may expect to suffer tribulation, because tribulation works patience, and causes the sufferer to know more of the grace of God. But the kingdom of glory will put an end to all tribulation. So Jesus comforts the despised and sorrowing little band of disciples with the words: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good-pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12:32.

James says: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, *and heirs of the kingdom*

which he hath promised to them that love him?" James 2:5. Here is the kingdom of which those rich in faith are only heirs; it is *promised* to those that love God, but they do not yet possess it. And to the same intent Peter, after mentioning the Christian graces,—faith, virtue, godliness, patience, brotherly kindness, charity, etc., says:—

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1:10, 11.

Thus we see that the grace of God, which is freely dispensed while Christ sits upon the throne of grace, and by means of which we are enabled to overcome (Heb. 4:14–16), simply fits us for the kingdom of glory, into which an abundant entrance will be ministered to the faithful at the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And so Christ said:—

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the *throne of his glory* [not the throne of grace]; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:31–34.

While he sits upon his Father's throne, it is as a priest, counseling with the Father for the peace of mankind. David tells until what time he will remain there, saying, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool." Acts 2:34, 35; Ps. 110:1.

When Christ was on this earth he had not kingly power, except as he was full of grace and truth. As the representative of the kingdom of grace, he had power on earth to forgive sins. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." But the kingdom of this world was not his. If it had been he would not have had to bear the curse of the earth in order to redeem it. Said he to Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." John 18:36. If he had then possessed the kingdom, he would have destroyed his enemies, as he will do when he comes again, after he has received it. At that time he paid tribute to earthly kings; when he comes again it will be as King of kings and Lord of lords.

From all these texts it is evident that Christ did not receive the kingdom at his first advent. Instead of having a kingdom, he had not so much as a place to lay his head. But he has ascended to the right hand of God, there to remain until the kingdom is given to him, and his enemies are made his footstool, when he will return to rid his kingdom of his enemies, and to plant his people Israel in their own land.

The parable of the ten pounds, as recorded by Luke, was given for the purpose of teaching this very thing. "And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading." Luke 19:11–15. Then follows the accounting with the servants, and the commendation of those who had been faithful; and the parable closes with these words: "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." This is so plain as to need no comment. It shows that Christ has gone to Heaven to receive the kingdom, and that he will return when he has received it.

In the seventh chapter of Daniel, verses 9, 10, there is a graphic word picture of the judgment in Heaven, which will determine who are worthy to be raised from the dead, or to be translated when the Lord comes. As soon as this judgment is over, Christ will receive his kingdom, as we read in the following verses:—

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. 7:13, 14.

This is the fulfillment of the words of the angel Gabriel to Mary, when he announced the birth of Jesus, saying: "And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:32, 33.

The throne of David is the throne that was promised to Christ; therefore the dominion, the receiving of which is described in Dan. 7:13, 14, must be the kingdom of Israel. It was declared that his everlasting dominion should be over the house of Jacob, yet the prophet, after telling of the destruction of earthly monarchies, says: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. 7:27. Therefore it must be that all the saints of God will constitute the people of Israel, over whom Christ shall reign. This truth has been referred to before, but now more extended positive Scripture proof is in order.

1. The promise is: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Rev. 3:21. Now the word "Israel" signifies, "a prince of God," or "one who prevails." It was given to Jacob after he had wrestled all night with the angel, and had gained the victory. The Lord said to him: "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." Gen. 32:28. Therefore an overcomer is an Israelite; and the promise is that to those who are Israelites Christ will grant to sit with him in his throne.

2. The natural descendants of Abraham were never considered as the true Israel, and heirs according to the promise, unless they were, like him, righteous. When Christ told the Jews that if they believed in him they should know the truth and the truth should make them free,

they replied, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man." John 8:33. But Jesus showed them that they were in a worse bondage than any human slavery, namely, the bondage of sin (verse 34); and to their repeated statements that they were the children of Abraham, he replied: "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God; this did not Abraham." "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Verses 39, 40, 44.

In like manner, also, John the Baptist told the wicked Pharisees and Sadducees not to flatter themselves that they were the children of Abraham, because God was able of the very stones to raise up children unto Abraham (Matt. 3:7–9), plainly implying that sooner than fulfill the promise to such unworthy descendants as they were, God would take stones and raise up children unto Abraham. That this was not a new idea, is evident from the fact that even in the wilderness, from the very time that the promise was renewed to the Jews at the exode, the stubborn Jew who refused to humble himself before God, and confess his sin, on the day of atonement, was cut off from among his people (Lev. 23:28, 29), while a stranger was at any time permitted to identify himself with Israel by circumcision.

Circumcision was the mark of Jewish citizenship. The man who was circumcised was known to be an Israelite; yet, as has been stated, this was a rite administered to foreigners, after which they were considered the same as those that were born of Jewish parents, thus showing that the natural descendants of Abraham did not comprise all Israel. More than this, we have evidence to show that the Lord never regarded the outward mark of circumcision, whether in the person of a native Jew, or a foreigner, as evidence that that individual was really an heir of Abraham. In the following passage we learn what circumcision implied:—

"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision; but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believed, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also." Rom. 4:8–11.

Abraham received circumcision as a sign that he had obtained "the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ." Circum-

cision was therefore a sign of righteousness. If a person was circumcised, but was not righteous, he was no more a child of Abraham than any other man; and whoever was righteous, like Abraham, was really his child. So Abraham was the father of all that believed, whether circumcised or uncircumcised. That outward circumcision did not make a man an Israelite, unless he was righteous, is plainly declared by Paul in Rom. 2:25–29:—

"For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore, if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? . . . For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

This was true, not simply when the apostle wrote, but from the beginning of the history of the Jewish nation. When the Lord gave laws to his people, from Mount Sinai, he said that if they disobeyed him he would bring desolation upon their land, and they should perish among the heathen; but,—

"If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; . . . if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land." Lev. 26:40–42.

And so it was in the days of Moses, as well as in the days of Christ, that "an Israelite indeed" was one in whom was "no guile."

In the eleventh of Romans the apostle very forcibly illustrates the way in which the promises to Israel could be fulfilled, even though all the literal descendants of Jacob should forfeit their right to the inheritance. In the first and second verses he declares that God has not cast away his people. This might lead us to suppose that literal Israel are yet the chosen people of God, if he did not say in verse 5 that those that remain are "according to the election of grace." Then he represents Israel by an olive tree. Some of the branches have been cut off, and the Gentiles, a wild olive tree, have been grafted in. This grafting is contrary to nature, for the grafts partake of the root and fatness of the tame olive tree into which they are grafted, and bear the same kind of fruit. He warns those who are thus grafted in not to boast, since they stand only by faith, and as natural branches were broken off because of

unbelief, so they may likewise be removed. The Jews, the natural branches, may become part of the tree, but if they do, it will not be as original branches, but as spiritual grafts. Thus the people of Israel will be only a spiritual people, those who are Christ's, "and so all Israel shall be saved."

We can now pass rapidly to the close of our subject, with a view of the gathering of Israel, and of their establishment in their own land. We turn first to the prophecy of Ezekiel, and must necessarily quote a large portion of the thirty-seventh chapter. The prophecy was uttered soon after the Jews were carried away to Babylon. And here we would remark, incidentally, that the books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, are the only prophecies that were not spoken either before or during the captivity, and that Haggai and Zechariah were written before the complete restoration after the captivity. Therefore whatever portion of the prophecies refers to the restoration of literal Israel, was fulfilled by the decrees of the kings of Persia. As we shall see, however, the greater portion of the prophecies refers to the final gathering of the true Israel of God. Now for Ezekiel's prophecy:—

"The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about; and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army." Eze. 37:1–10.

It is useless to spend time conjecturing what this may mean, when we have the Lord's explanation given in connection with it, so we quote further:—

"Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." Verses 11–14.

This is nothing less than a prophecy of the resurrection of the righteous at the second coming of Christ. But the Lord continues the interpretation thus:—

"Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land." Verse 20.

No one can deny that the gathering of Israel of which Ezekiel

speaks, is the same gathering that is spoken of by the other prophets. It is evident that the words, "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and *bring them into their own land*," is the same promise that the Lord made to David, through the prophet Nathan, when he said (2 Sam. 7 : 10), "Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may *dwell in a place of their own*, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime." And this gathering of the children of Israel into their own land is accomplished only by opening their graves and bringing them up out of their graves. In this prophecy of Ezekiel, therefore, we have the most positive assurance that the promises to Israel never contemplated anything else but an eternal inheritance; their own land is the earth made new.

With Ezekiel's statement that the gathering of Israel shall follow the general resurrection, compare the following:—

"And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. 24 : 30, 31.

When this gathering of the people of God takes place, "the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4 : 16, 17. And this is what Paul calls "our gathering together unto him." 2 Thess. 2 : 1.

Returning to the prophecy of Ezekiel, we find out what will follow this gathering of Israel:—

"And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two nations any more at all. . . . And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd; they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children forever; and my servant David shall be their prince forever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them;

yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Eze. 37: 22–27.

With the statement that they shall be placed in their own land, in peace forever, compare the promise to David, in 2 Sam. 7 : 10. And with Eze. 37:27: "My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people;" compare what John says in his prophetic description of the new heavens and the new earth: "And I heard a great voice out of Heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." Rev. 21 : 3–5.

Again, with the statement that God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, *neither sorrow* nor crying, which is expressly declared to be when the earth is made new, read the following, and there cannot remain a doubt but that the gathering which the prophets of old spoke concerning Israel, was the gathering to the New Jerusalem in the new earth:—

"He that scattered Israel *will gather him*, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For *the Lord hath redeemed Jacob*, and *ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he* [compare Hosea 13 : 14]. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd; and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and *they shall not sorrow any more at all.*" Jer. 31:10–12.

Before this has been consummated, however, the wicked must be destroyed from the earth. When Christ,—"the Seed to whom the promise was made,"—the One whose the kingdom is by right,—shall come, he will say to the true Israel, who are gathered from all the earth, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25 : 34. This resurrection of the righteous at the coming of Christ, is called the first resurrection, and takes place one thousand years before the resurrection of the wicked (Rev. 20 : 1–5), of whom those not previously dead are destroyed "by the brightness of his coming." During this thousand years the earth will be desolate, reduced to its primitive, chaotic state, as is described in Jer. 4 : 23–27: "I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved

lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end." See also Isa. 34 : 2–15, in which it is stated of the earth that "from generation to generation it shall lie waste;" and that the Lord "shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness."

It is called "bottomless pit," because that word is the same as "the deep" of Gen. 1 : 2, which, as the earth will be during the one thousand years, was "without form, and void." In this desolate place Satan will be obliged to stay, and is therefore "bound," being unable to deceive the nations until the thousand years are expired, when the wicked will be raised, and he can exercise his power again for a little season. Then the holy city, the New Jerusalem, will come down from God out of Heaven (Rev. 21 : 1), the hosts of the wicked, under the leadership of Satan, will go up on the breadth of the earth, and encompass the beloved city, when fire shall come down from God out of Heaven and devour them. Rev. 20 : 7–9. This fire shall burn as an oven, until the wicked are burned up root and branch (Mal. 4 : 1), and shall also dissolve the earth and purify it from all its corruption. 2 Peter 3 : 7, 10, 11. From their place of safety in the city of God, the saints will behold the destruction of the wicked (Isa. 33 : 14–16; Ps. 37 : 34), and shall afterward go out upon the purified earth, which will then be their home throughout eternity.

But if the earth is the kingdom, and the saints do not dwell upon it for more than a thousand years after the coming of the Lord, how can it be said that they inherit the kingdom at his coming? This is easily answered. At the first resurrection the saints are taken at once to the capital of the kingdom, the New Jerusalem, where, during the thousand years, they are associated with Jesus in judging the wicked, and determining the punishment due each one. Rev. 20 : 4–6; 1 Cor. 6 : 2, 3. During this time the entire history of the world will pass under the eyes of the saints, and they will understand the secret workings that have been hidden from all but the eyes of God. Then the things which have seemed obscure, in God's dealings with men, will be understood. So Christ and his saints will be *in possession* of the earth during all the thousand years, although they do not dwell in it during that time. It will be in their hands, and they will be engaged in making it fit for habitation, by removing from it those things which offend. The kingdom is given to Christ as soon as he leaves the throne of grace, and ceases to plead for sinners. From that time "the

uttermost parts of the earth" are his possession, and he at once proceeds to dash the nations in pieces, so that when his people Israel are planted in the land, the children of wickedness shall not afflict them any more. (See 2 Sam. 7 : 10.)

The glories of the eternal inheritance of Israel cannot be imagined, although the pen of inspiration has described them as well as could be done with our feeble language. We read that immediately after the desolation of the earth,—

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. . . . And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and ever-

lasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isa. 35. "They shall obtain joy and gladness," because "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." Rev. 21:4.

Again the prophet says of "Jerusalem which is above," and is free, which is the mother of us all (compare Gal. 4:26, 27 and Isa. 54:1): "For thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called." Isa. 54:5. Jerusalem is represented as now mourning as a widow, desolate and bereaved of her children,—those whom she would have had if sin had not deprived her of them. But when the kingdom is given to Christ, "the everlasting Father," the city is represented as being married to him (Rev. 21:1, 9, 10), and all the faithful are the children. So the Lord comforts Zion, saying:—

"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." Isa. 54:11, 12.

With the above read the following description of the New Jerusalem by a New Testament writer:—

"And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel; on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. . . . And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." Rev. 21: 10–21.

Who cannot see that the two prophets, Isaiah and John, are de-

scribing the same thing? the place to which the Israel of God are to be gathered, and where the twelve apostles shall sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. But the prophet Isaiah continues:—

"And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear; and from terror; for it shall not come near thee." Isa. 54:13, 14.

Thus will be fulfilled the promise to David, in 2 Sam. 7:10.

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper [see Rev. 20:9, 10]; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Isa. 54:17.

And a glorious heritage it will be. Delightful indeed it is to read these descriptions of it; "but what must it be to be there?"

But there are a few more prophecies that we must notice, out of the many upon this subject. We read:—

"And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever. Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isa. 59:20, 21; 60:1–3. "Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces [wealth] of the Gentiles [nations], and that their kings may be brought. . . . Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." Isa. 60:11–20.

Read this carefully, and then compare it with the following:—

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in

the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it." Rev. 21:23–26.

Once more we read:—

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. [Compare Rev. 21:4, 5.] But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying. . . . And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. . . . They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and th offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat; they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord." Isa. 65:17–25. (See also Isa. 11:1–9.)

What! lions and wolves in the new earth, the saints' eternal inheritance? Yes, most certainly, for when the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem, "the first dominion" shall be restored; and the first dominion was over "all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." Ps. 8:6–8; Gen. 1:26–28. The kingdom and dominion which God will give to his people will be very real,—as real as was the original kingdom of David, and infinitely more glorious and blessed, for it will be Eden restored.

"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this. . . . And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And *I will plant them* upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." Amos 9:11–15. Read also once more with this, 2 Sam. 7:10.

As surely as the waters of Noah once covered the earth; as surely as God's throne is in the heavens, founded upon justice and judgment,

so surely will this be the heritage of the saints, the true Israel. And so,—

"Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else. I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth; I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain; I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." Isa. 45 : 17–19.

And "many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven." Matt. 8 : 11.